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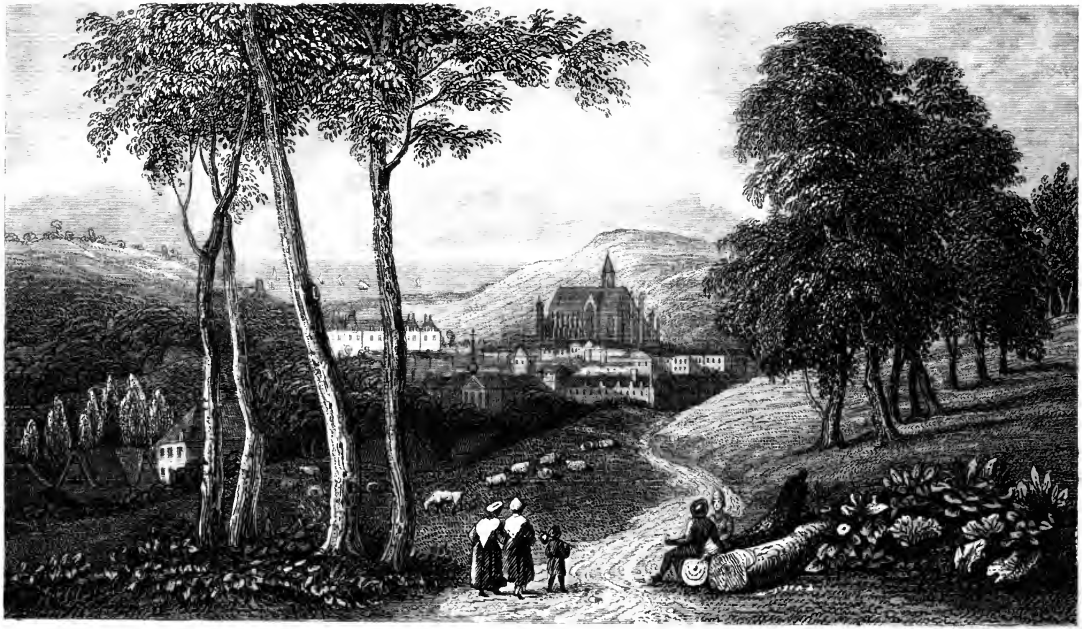
ROLLO
AND HIS RACE.

VOL. II.



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G. B.,
Hist.

ROLLO

AND HIS RACE;

OR,

FOOTSTEPS OF THE NORMANS.

BY ACTON WARBURTON.

This folk of Normandie
Among us woneth yet, and shalleth ever moe.
Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle.

SECOND EDITION, REVISED, WITH ADDITIONS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1848.

DC
611
N855W3
1848
v.2

LONDON :
Printed by S. & J. Bentley, Wilson, and Fley,
Bangor House, Shoe Lane.

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LOWER NORMANDY.

ROLLO AND HIS RACE.

CHAPTER I.

CAEN.—SPIRE OF ST. PETER'S.—APSE.—SIMPLICITY THE RULING PRINCIPLE OF THE TEUTON ARCHITECT'S MIND.—CURIOUS RELIEFS IN ST. PETER'S.—THE TWO MAIDENS AT PRAYER.—JOY AND SORROW.—ST. ETIENNE AND ST. TRINITÉ.—BURIAL OF THE CONQUEROR.—SISTERS OF CHARITY.—VINCENT DE PAUL.—TRADITIONAL STATUE OF WILLIAM.

Why let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play;
For some must watch, while some may sleep,
Thus runs the world away

Shakspeare.

Those silent avenues
Of stateliest architecture, where the forms
Of nun-like females with soft motion glide.

Wordsworth.

THE factories I have already mentioned as encircling Rouen on all sides, preponderate in the direction of Elbœuf. Throughout the livelong year in this the Leeds of France, twelve thousand souls keep weary watch over

the rattling spinning-jennies. Colbert first set them going. Two years after his death they were checked by the revocation of the edict of Nantes ; but in 1814, delivered from the rivalry of Belgium, they took new life, and began to move with triple energy.

From Elbœuf to Lisieux you pass through a finely undulated and darkly wooded country, bearing a strong resemblance in its general features to the southern counties of England. Lisieux having been the capital of the Lexovians, a Gaulish tribe, abounds in ruins of that people ; it also offers very many interesting specimens of domestic timber architecture. The church of St. Peter, formerly the cathedral, stands on the site of a grand Norman church, which perished by fire in the year 1226. In the ancient church Henry II. espoused Eleanor of Guienne. The lady chapel of the present building was erected by Cauchon, Bishop of Evreux, in expiation of the share he bore in the condemnation of Joan of Arc, of whom he was one of the judges. To Lisieux Thomas à Becket retired during his exile, and it had the

honour of giving birth to the brave Le Hennuyer, who kept his native town unstained by blood on the awful night of St. Bartholomew.

Lisieux is now a manufacturing town. Horse-collar housings form a large item in its productions, the demand for this article being very considerable in the neighbourhood. In all seasons, hot, or cold, or wet, it constitutes an indispensable part of the harness of the district. The little Norman ponies go about buried from their ears to the saddle in deep blue or red-coloured rugs, the pile of great depth, and their vivid eyes look out at you in the queerest manner from these mountains of worsted.

From Lisieux the road lies through rich meadows, intersected with ridges of limestone, to Caen.

Caen, the capital of Lower Normandy, has a character entirely different from the general capital of the Province—Rouen. The latter is all animation and bustle, the former breathes sedateness and repose. Through the narrow, tortuous streets of Rouen, in strict mediæval keeping with the dark irregular houses, and

spireless churches, there flows continually a stream of busy anxious mortals. Caen, on the contrary, with its wide streets, buildings of white stone,* and pyramidal steeples, has an air of monastic tranquillity, reflected in the deportment of the inhabitants. One of these steeples shooting up into the air, to the height of two hundred and thirty feet, will not fail to attract your first attention. It belongs to the church of St. Peter, which forms one side of the market-square, and is looked upon by the wise in these matters as the best specimen of a pointed spire that was ever raised. Its shape is octagonal. The open star-work piercing it throughout, gives a peculiarly light and airy appearance; and the masonry is so fine that the top, at so great a distance from the eye, seems to draw to a point sharper than a needle.

* The Caen-stone is well known, and is now very generally used. Many of the ancient houses are of chesnut timber, for the use of stone was restricted by Henry V. to the building and repairing of "eglises, chastaulx, et forteresses." I believe the letters-patent are still in existence, by which Henry declared that the "white stone quarries" were to remain to him and his heirs *for ever*.

The exterior of the apse resting in the river, is the pride of the votaries of the *Renaissance*. It is covered with an amazing profusion of images, very graceful, and of beautiful execution certainly; but so multiplied and crowded together, that the effect produced is less pleasure than bewilderment.

It seems very questionable whether an entire absence of ornament—perfect plainness and simplicity—does not best consort with a Christian church. The Teuton architect seemed to feel this. We see in the Cisalpine specimens the fine effect produced by large spaces of blank surface, and we may believe the Transalpine architects would have adopted a similar principle had they been permitted by the nature of their material, and the climate to which it was to be exposed. But we must remember the immense advantage possessed in this respect by the workman within the Alps. His unlimited command of marble enabled him to gratify his simple taste by the employment of undecorated surfaces; while the northern architect, even in the purest period of the art, was forced to use

some ornament with a view of diverting the eye, and prevent its resting on the blank material. "An open space of freestone wall is always uninteresting, and sometimes offensive; there is no suggestion of preciousness in its dull colour, and the stains and rents of time upon it are dark, coarse, and gloomy. But a marble surface receives in its age hues of continually increasing glow and grandeur; its stains are never foul nor dim; its undecomposing surface preserves a soft, fruit-like polish for ever, slowly flushed by the maturing suns of centuries." Again, the Transalpine architect wanted the power of Italian sunshine, which threw out and defined the minutest relief. He was forced, therefore, to have recourse to boldness of salience, for the slight elevation of outline, so effective within the Alps, would have been vain and scarcely perceptible under northern skies.

Such were the necessities ruling the Transalpine architect. But the ornament employed by him was always limited to the quantity absolutely essential to conceal the infirmities of his material. It was not until the Saracenic spirit

was infused into the art that it descended to that superfluity and minuteness of decoration which, subjected to a microscope, and arranged in a cabinet, would be highly interesting, but at a distance from the eye has the effect only of unseemly rustication. And surely there was something very sublime in that æsthetic confidence that threw itself daringly on the great features of the building, rejecting, as far as possible, the succours of sculptural decoration, and confining its embellishment to the result producible by bold undercutting and adjustment of light and shade.

As we look upon this minute decoration of the apse of St. Peter, we feel impressions created which do not accord with the general design of the structure. Our thoughts are, in spite of ourselves, diverted from the religious purpose of the edifice. If recourse must be had to decoration, it should at all events blend with, or at least refer to, the entire edifice as a sacred building. Then as to some of the interior embellishment, it seems studiously to aim at discordance with the main

design; for instance, the pieces of sculpture appearing on the capital of one of the pillars of the nave, representing scenes from the "Romaunt of the Rose," "Sir Launcelot of the Lake," and the "Lay of Aristotle." Tristan de Léonois, the hero of the Romaunt, is crossing the sea to his ladylove on his sword, converted for the occasion into a pontoon bridge. The handle rests on one shore, the point enters the window of a castle standing on the other; from its summit the ladylove's head, considerably larger than the castle, smiles on the valour of her lover. Close behind the castle, in a chariot drawn by two handsome thorough-bred dragons, Sir Launcelot is driving to the Queen Genevre, and the remainder of this part of the capital is occupied with that curious relief, which appears also at the cathedral of Rouen, namely, Aristotle on his hands and knees, carrying a lady on his back, Alexander's mistress some say, his own according to others. In the midst of all these wild fellows St. Paul in a basket is descending the walls of Damascus.

I had taken a sketch of this quaint specimen of ecclesiastical embellishment, and was turning to depart, when my attention was arrested by a figure in the deepest mourning, who, telling her beads with wild rapidity passed along the several stations of the aisle. As she came opposite each pictured representation of some passage in the Saviour's suffering walk to Calvary, she fell upon her knees, wrung her hands, and prayed in agony. Once she threw back her sable veil to gaze on the crucifixion, and I caught a glimpse of her face. Oh, what a history of anguish was there revealed! I saw it all at once. Some one very guilty and very dear is gone from her for ever! She pours forth those intercessions that her priest tells her it is not yet too late to offer, but that suffering countenance betrays some terrible doubts that the day of hope is past!—I could not continue to intrude upon such grief, though I question whether it was not far too profound to care for being witnessed. I withdrew towards the southern portal, which opened upon the busy

market-place, and here I encountered a figure whose joyous aspect presented an affecting contrast to the mournful being who knelt and wept in the opposite aisle—daughters of the same race, dwellers under the same sky, denizens of the same land, numbering the like years—yet did they differ in presence, as the sudden blush of an eastern sunrise, from the sad misty dawn of one of our winter mornings. You would have thought this last visitant some angelic messenger sent to her suffering sister with gifts of hope. Her countenance was radiant with health, her form instinct with the exuberant vitality of youth's first freshness; every gesture showed its elastic vigour. On her fair forehead sat contentment like a star. She had stolen for a moment from the bustling throng, and hastened to offer the homage of her heart to the God who had been so good to her. She removed the little basket of vegetables from her arm, laid it on the step of the choir beside her, and then crossing her hands meekly on her bosom, she knelt down and poured out the gratitude of her

heart to the Being who had strewed her life's path with flowers. I could have gazed for ever at that graceful form, those soft uplifted eyes, and that beautiful young face, whose happy expression had now changed to one of sweet solemnity.

"It was a sight to make an old man young."

In a few minutes she arose, resumed her little basket, descended the aisle again, and pausing as she passed the *bénitier* to dip her hand in the holy water, opened the door and went out of the cathedral.

I longed to have had with me some unbeliever in a future world, if so wretched a person does in truth exist. Could he have looked upon those two girls and resisted the conviction of an immortality? Could he hesitate to admit the belief of an atoning future where such terrible inequalities in human condition shall be balanced? Could he refuse to echo the poet's thought—

"There 's something in this world amiss
Will be unriddled by and by."

* * * * *

The most interesting objects that Caen can offer are the two churches of St. Etienne and St. Trinité, with their adjoining buildings. Unquestioned products of the eleventh century, remaining in excellent preservation, unimpaired by any additions of a later period, they present fine studies of the Norman style. The roof of St. Etienne, which is clearly of the same date as the rest of the church, establishes a point which has had some doubt thrown upon it, namely, that the Normans understood perfectly the art of stone-vaulting. But it is not only on the attention of the ecclesiologist that these churches have a demand; they are rife with the most interesting historical associations. To the following circumstance they owe their origin.

William the Conqueror, in marrying his cousin Matilda, had violated the canon laws of consanguinity, and brought upon him the censure of the pope. In the case of a less powerful prince, the marriage would have been probably dissolved at once, but with William his holiness dared not proceed to extremities. Conceiving

it necessary, however, to give some mark of his displeasure, he required the cousins to found each a religious establishment in expiation of their offence.

In obedience, accordingly, to the papal injunction, William erected the church and convent of St. Etienne, as his share of the purgation, while the abbey and church of St. Trinité represented the penitence of Matilda. They were also called respectively the *abbaye aux hommes* and *abbaye aux dames*. For admission into either, noble birth was an essential qualification.

St. Etienne is the burial-place of the Conqueror. In the circumstance attending his death-bed at St. Gervais, we have had an instructive lesson on the value of human power. In those attending his funeral, as related by Ordericus Vitalis, we may learn another not less significant on the same subject.

William, as already said, had married a distant cousin, and to build a church was the penance enjoined by the pope. In expiation of an innocent act a most guilty one was

perpetrated. It so happened that the site selected for the church had long been the place of residence of a poor man named Asselin. By virtue of a whole life given to its cultivation, the soil around had been transformed from sterility into a comely garden. Amidst the trees which Asselin had planted, he and his wife had waxed old together, and his children grown to maturity. But what of all that! what to the stern Conqueror were the old associations, the local attachments, the comforts, the rights of a peasant! His cottage was demolished, the trees felled, the garden broken up, and Asselin driven forth upon the world. Then came the great architects, and the noble Norman church replaced the peasant's home. Many came to view its grandeur, and pray beneath its lofty aisles. By all, save one, were Asselin and his wrongs forgotten — that one was Asselin's son. He chose his hour of retribution well!

When the chevalier who bore the remains of the Conqueror from St. Gervais to Caen had arrived at the latter place, he communicated to

the clergy of St. Etienne the king's last request to be laid within their church's walls. They hastened to execute his wishes, and perform the funeral rites over the body of their founder. The procession was formed and they advanced to the church, Asselin's son having joined the crowd as they entered. They advance to the sanctuary where the grave is opened; the solemn music commences; and they lower the remains of the mighty as the priest utters the primeval sentence. Suddenly Asselin's son advanced from the crowd and stood between the bier and the grave. Raising his hands to heaven, he exclaimed, "I invoke the name of Rollo! This grave, this ground, is mine. My childhood's home was here. The Conqueror desolated it, driving my father in his old age on the world. Till you have righted the Peasant, you shall not bury the King. I invoke the name of Rollo!"

The "*clamour de Haro*,"* was still in full force; Asselin knew it was the poor man's only hope, and daring though the act, for

* See vol. i, page 202.

Asselin was unarmed, unfriended, and alone, he felt that he was safe; that under the shelter of the great name he had invoked he and his rights were secure. The astonished attendants drew back with their burden, the priest suspended the service, and, before he ventured to resume the funeral rites, Asselin received the full value of his land. But heaven seemed not yet appeased, as the coffin was lowered into the vault it struck against a stone and falling from the bearers' hands, was broken into pieces, whereupon says the chronicler, so shocking an odour arose from the corpse, that, despite the quantities of incense burned, the atmosphere became intolerable, the attendants were forced to rush from the church, and the funeral ceremonies were terminated in the utmost haste. From this grave, so hardly won, the Conqueror's bones were torn up by the Calvinists in a religious paroxysm, and scattered everywhere about. A thigh-bone alone remained; this having been discovered some years afterwards, was reburied, but again to be exhumed.

As I have formerly mentioned, the Abbey of the Holy Trinity was Matilda's share of the penance imposed by the church for having married her cousin. Here she was buried. She breathed her last within the arms of her daughter Cecile, who was second abbess. Her remains were subjected to the same indignity as those of her husband, having been torn up first by the Calvinists, and afterwards by the Revolutionists; but, being firmly cased in lead, they escaped destruction, and in 1819 were restored to their ancient resting-place, now marked by a raised tesselated marble slab in the centre of the choir.

During the wars of the thirteenth century, Caen was surrounded with strong fortifications; when they were completed, St. Stephen and the Holy Trinity stood without the walls, and, in consequence of their exposed position, the monks and nuns obtained leave to raise fortifications of their own. From this circumstance those establishments presented the novel and somewhat incongruous combination of a barrack and a monastery. The sword of the soldier

and the robe of the monk trailed through the same cloister at St. Stephen; the trooper's song and the tones of holy prayer mingled in the echoes as they rolled away, while pacing the ramparts of the Holy Trinity, the mailed warrior and the wimpled nun looked on the fair landscape from the heights of St. Giles.

From St. Stephen the soldier and the monk have alike passed away, the defences have wholly disappeared, and the monastic buildings have been converted into a provincial college; but the Holy Trinity still presents a shadow of what it once was. There we still find armed men on guard, and women parted from the world—heaven-devoted; but the former is the small red-legged soldier of the —— regiment of the line, and daughters of the humble classes are mingled with the gentle-born of the land.

This was, at its first institution, and for many centuries continued to be, a very aristocratic establishment. At the time the church was consecrated, the Conqueror's daughter, Cecile, was in the nurse's arms. Alike un-

conscious of their holy destiny, the same day saw them both consecrated to the service of heaven. Cecile became the second abbess, and unswervingly kept the vow that another had made for her—within these convent walls she lived and died. Robert Curthose, brother to Henry the First, was extremely attached to his sister Cecile, and paid her frequent visits here. On the last occasion of their meeting, he presented her with the great standard of the Saracens, taken with his own hands at the siege of Ascalon. This proud trophy, which hung for a long time in the church, has now disappeared.

In the crypt beneath the choir was Cecile buried, her predecessor and many of the succeeding abbesses were laid there also. A fitter burying-place can scarcely be imagined for these holy women. Six-and-twenty delicate pillars of exquisite proportions support a vaulted roof of stone; through the lancet windows struggle in some gleams of dim religious light; and, save the foot of the occasional stranger, no sound ever violates the sanctity of its deep

silence and repose. An English tourist, whose name in pity I suppress, with rude profane mockery suggests that this beautiful and solemn sepulchre was no burying-place at all, but the lady abbess's wine-cellar!—fit jest for one who has included the whole community of *religieuses* in terms of condemnation as gross as they are untrue.

Honour to those devoted, self-denying women, who, through so many centuries, did honour to religion, by showing how great were the sacrifices she could command! The middle ages witnessed such offerings every day; noble oblations made by weak and gentle beings, who were at once the victims and the priests. Spurning the allurements of the world came the maiden and the matron, with their several treasures of youth and beauty and love; for the least favoured and lornest of all could yet offer her indefeasible birthright as a woman,—the deep affections of her heart. With these they approached the altar of the church, and bravely laid them there. To the worth of such offerings it adds but little to say that the

wealthy gave, as so much dross, their lands and gold.

Such were the Benedictine ladies, the ancient inmates of the Holy Trinity. They were of the noblest and wealthiest families in the land. Honour to them in their "martyr's cell;" but loftier honour still to those who are its inmates now; who, unsheltered by the "martyr's cell," bear through the glittering scenes of life the constancy of the "martyr's heart." I mean the Sisters of Charity. They are not found where mirth keeps holiday, nor among the gay and lighthearted are their affections suffered to exhale; in the chamber of poverty, by the couch of pain and sickness, among the stricken and the suffering of earth—here are bestowed those profound sympathies of which the world is not worthy. Others may pluck life's roses to bind the brow or strew the couch with softness; it is theirs to extract the thorn, alone the portion of too many, or soothe the wound it gives by sympathy and consolation. They feel that those to whom life's flowers are denied should suffer

as little as may be of life's pain, or at least not suffer it unshared. As you mark them move unheeding through the delights of this beautiful world, oh deem them not armed by insensibility, but sustained by a sense of how much that world contains of suffering it may be their privilege to lighten or remove. Though vulnerable in all the susceptibility of woman's youth or woman's tenderness, they are shielded by this feeling of what it may be theirs to do; and so they walk bravely through life, facing joy and temptation in their strongholds, and come out unscathed through the faith that makes their weakness strength.

And, trust me, they have their reward. 'Tis true that the years roll on, and each one bears away, alike untasted and unenjoyed, from earth its delights, and from life its unreturning poetry; but as they pass they unfold a secret the self-indulgent may never learn, or at least may never realize; that the true delight of earth, the real poetry of life, have their root in sacrifice and self-denial; springing from such a stem they are flowers that never fade, but bear

their amaranth blossoms to another world untouched by the winter of the grave.

I cannot forbear quoting the following lines from the pen of that true poet, Gerald Griffin:

"THE SISTER OF CHARITY.

"She once was a lady of honour and wealth,
Bright glowed on her features the roses of health;
Her vesture was blended of silk and of gold,
And her motion shook perfume from every fold:
Joy revell'd around her—love shone at her side,
And gay was her smile, as the glance of a bride;
And light was her step, in the mirth-sounding hall
When she heard of the daughters of Vincent de Paul.

"She felt in her spirit the summons of grace,
That called her to live for the suffering race;
And heedless of pleasure, of comfort, of home,
Rose quickly like Mary, and answered, 'I come.'
She put from her person the trappings of pride,
And passed from her home with the joy of a bride,
Nor wept at the threshold, as onwards she moved,
For her heart was on fire in the cause it approved.

"Lost ever to fashion—to vanity lost,
That beauty that once was the song and the toast—
No more in the ball-room that figure we meet,
But gliding at dusk to the wretch's retreat;
Forgot in the halls is that high-sounding name,
For the Sister of Charity blushes at fame.
Forgot are the claims of her riches and birth,
For she barters for heaven the glories of earth.

"Those feet, that to music could gracefully move,
Now bear her alone on the mission of love;
Those hands, that once dangled the perfumed gem,
Are tending the helpless or lifted for them;
That voice, that once echo'd the song of the vain,
Now whispers relief to the bosom of pain;
And the hair, that was shining with diamond and pearl,
Is wet with the tears of the penitent girl.

"Her down-bed a pallet; her trinkets a bead;
Her lustre, one taper that serves her to read;
Her sculpture, the crucifix nailed by her bed;
Her paintings, one print of the thorn-crowned head;
Her cushion, the pavement that wearies her knees;
Her music, the psalm, or the sigh of disease;
The delicate lady lives mortified there,
And the feast is forsaken for fasting and prayer.

"Yet not to the service of heart and of mind
Are the cares of that heaven-minded virgin confined:
Like Him whom she loves, to the mansions of grief
She hastes with the tidings of joy and relief;
She strengthens the weary, she comforts the weak,
And soft is her voice in the ear of the sick;
When want and affliction on mortals attend,
The Sister of Charity *then* is a friend.

"Unshrinking where pestilence carries his breath,
Like an angel she moves 'mid the vapour of death;
Where rings the loud musket and flashes the sword,
Unfearing she walks, for she follows the Lord.
How sweetly she bends o'er each plague-painted face,
With looks that are lighted with holiest grace;
How kindly she dresses each suffering limb,
For she sees in the wounded the image of Him.

"Behold her, ye worldly! behold her, ye vain!
Who shrink from the pathway of virtue and pain,
Who yield up to pleasure your nights and your days,
Forgetful of service, forgetful of praise;
Ye lazy philosophers, self-seeking men,
Ye fireside philanthropists, great at the pen,
How stands in the balance your eloquence weighed
With the life and the deeds of that high-born maid?"

The order of the Sisters of Charity owes its origin to the wise benevolence of Vincent de Paul. Captured by pirates when a boy, he was sold at Tunis as a slave, and subjected to the most rigorous treatment; but, far from being soured to his kind by ill-usage, a youth of suffering was succeeded by an after-life devoted to the good of man. Having effected his escape from Tunis, he entered upon a career of benevolence and charity unexampled in the history of the world.

Fully equalling our own Howard in his self-devotion, his untiring zeal, his single-heartedness, he far exceeded him in the wisdom of the means which he employed to accomplish his ends.

The good effected by Howard in his life was immense, but by that life it was, com-

paratively speaking, circumscribed: the grave closed upon all but his undying example. But the charity of Vincent received a kind of immortality, by means of the numerous foundations that resulted from his energies and eloquence:—that eloquence was irresistible, that energy infectious. With no help but virtue by his side, and the blessing of heaven above him, this poor apostle of the Gascon Landes founded no less than thirty-five charitable institutions in Paris alone, not to mention numerous others in different parts of France.

De Retz was his pupil, and that intractable nature paid at least the homage to his tutor's worth of fostering and protecting when in power all the institutions he had been the instrument of establishing.

Death itself failed to arrest his benevolence. Among those who stood around his grave was the Princess de Conti; she reminded the bystanders that he was not allowed time to carry out his plan of an hospital for the orphans of poor artisans. "Will you," urged this amiable lady, "will you allow him one regret

beyond the grave?" The appeal proved irresistible, and the foundation of the asylum was resolved on at his tomb.

But of all the institutions he was the means of establishing, the noblest was that of the Sisters of Charity. For the relief of suffering humanity he had conceived a grand design. 'Tis was not in man to realize it; woman alone could carry out his scheme, and woman devoted body and soul to the task. He rightly judged that the faith and spirit of self-sacrifice, which could encounter the gloom and austerity of the cloister, would be proof against the temptations of the world, while the untiring energies and deep sympathies, that in the objectless life of the convent lay dormant, or eat inwardly to the heart, might be turned to glorious account on the paths of pain and sorrow.

He proceeded to communicate his plan, with the intention of carrying it into immediate execution, and the alacrity that responded to his appeal, shewed how wisely he had selected the instruments of his purpose.

He addressed the aspirants thus:—"You will have no monasteries but the houses of the poor, —no cloisters but the streets of towns, and the rooms of hospitals,—no enclosure but obedience,—no veil but a holy modesty. My intention is that you should tend the suffering and infirm, as a mother watches over an only son."

The rules which he laid down for the regulation of his new institution were so wisely framed, that at this day the order is in a flourishing condition. In addition to the personal qualifications required, the family of the "sister" must have borne an irreproachable character for centuries; and, in order that none might undertake the office in ignorance of its duties, a probation of five years was required. Moreover, as they were not suffered to dedicate themselves for more than one year, and annually required to renew their vows, a sufficient provision was afforded that no backslider or lukewarm person should be engaged in so righteous a cause.

Such was this institution of Vincent de Paul. It extorted admiration even from the uncom-

promising Graham. After contemplating this noble establishment, this order of women, whose ordinary employment and daily duties are those heavenly virtues to which the rest of the world only occasionally rise, the severe puritan could not help confessing that he was softened towards the "fierce superstition of the triple crown."* After his death Vincent was transferred to the calendar, and the title of saint conferred upon him. We feel that this canonization adds no glory to such a memory.

The principal care of the "sisters" of the Holy Trinity are the inmates of the hospital into which the old conventual buildings have been transformed. They are six hundred in number; and every thing that excellent arrangement and the greatest care can effect has been done for their comfort. The sisters are indefatigable in their attendance, and day and night are perpetually engaged in ministering to the sufferers.

Nothing can be more graceful than the sisters' costume. A loose white robe, reaching

* Graham's "Sabbath."

from the throat to the feet, is confined at the waist by a cord girdle. The broad sleeves hang down in graceful drapery. The wimple, which descends to the shoulders behind, meets on the forehead a band of snowy muslin, carried thence round under the chin; a crucifix reposes on the devoted heart, where it is supported by a necklace of heavy beads. This completes the attire.

At every step the ample foldings of their robe undulate in outlines of everchanging beauty as their form moves beneath. Now a gracious figure pauses in the perspective of a long staircase, looking in its framework of columns on either side like the image of purity in a niche. The next moment it is gone on its mission of philanthropy. Again, as you descend the cloister, a white form issues from a postern-door, and as it lingers a moment in the aisle the snowy draperies arrange themselves in unconscious grace. You have but a moment to wonder whether the *tableau* is of earth or heaven, when it is again in motion, and the arches above seem to bend in reverence to the Sister of Charity as she moves along.

There is no exclusiveness or fear of contamination about these holy women. They are too good and pure for that. They will talk to you as if you were of the same spirit with them; as if your life was like theirs, a reality, and not perhaps a mere sham of an existence, nothing real but the digestion. As I left the convent a nun sat behind a grating near the door. Her duty was to preside over the coffers of the establishment, and pay for the food and medicine necessary for the hospital. You cannot fail to notice the peculiar expression the countenances of these sisters exhibit. There is nothing resembling it among other women, however favoured or happy,—a blended serenity and joy no words can describe.

The aspect of this sister, however, far outvied the rest,—'twas that of a "seraph from the sky descending, above all tears, yet pitying all distress." As the stranger passed, he ventured to approach the bright vision, and reverently laid on the table before her a small sum of money, begging that his presumption might be forgotten and the poor remembered. And

oh ! the sweet tones in which she thanked him,—the look with which she accompanied the words. It was one of those looks that stamp themselves at once upon the heart in characters that are never afterwards effaced. I could not help muttering, as Lord Herbert to the nun at Murano, "Moria pur quando vuol, non bisogna mutar ni voce ni faccia per esser un angelo."

There are several other churches at Caen that would well repay the researches of the ecclesiologist. They are most of them of very early date. Into the oldest, St. Nicholas, you may ride and put up your horse ; an accommodation for which you are indebted to the Calvinists, who pulled down the roof and great part of the aisles, using the remainder as a stable. According to the notions of these zealous men, there was some peculiar profanity in stained glass. They therefore righteously destroyed every particle of it here, and the churches of Caen are now wholly destitute of that ornament.

The shade of the Conqueror broods, as it

were, over the town of Caen. "All things are here of Him"—of William the Norman. There seems a feeling among men that the great spirit once dwelling there, lingers unseen yet. Every piece of antiquity of at all dubious origin is referred to, or associated in some way with him.

For instance, upon the outer wall, behind the choir of St. Etienne le Vieux, there is an equestrian statue. The horse is reduced to a biped, and time has carried off three-fourths of his head. The rider has fared worse, he exhibits only half an arm, a foot, a portion of the bust, and is altogether acephalous. Now, to satisfy the whole world that this is a statue of the Conqueror, a worthy magistrate of Caen was for a long time assiduously employed; his remarks resulting finally in an octavo of more than ordinary obesity. The whole rests on the flimsiest tradition, for after the above description I need hardly say there is no *internal* evidence of such an intention. It shews, however, the prevailing idea; and the following anecdote may prove that the impressions made on the

imaginations of the conquered people by the character of the Normans, was not confined to the neighbourhood of Caen; while it may also be commended to the worthy magistrate for a sample of the value of tradition as a guide when applied to such objects.

The sacristan of the church at Louviers was shewing to an English party the fine tombs in his charge. "Mademoiselle," said he to a young lady, "vous devez connaître ce tombeau, car il y a un roi de votre pays enterré là." This being a new fact to the lady, she requested to be made acquainted with the name of her royal countryman, upon which the sacristan answered with great gravity, "Mais c'est le Roi Nabuchodonosor."

CHAPTER II.

THE LUNATIC ASYLUM. — MADAME VAUBON. — THE CONFESSIONAL.

Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

Byron.

Oh! love, what is it in this world of ours,
That makes it fatal to be loved? Ah why
With cypress branches hast thou wreathed thy bowers,
And made thy best interpreter a sigh?
As those who doat on odours pluck the flowers,
And place them in their breast, but place to die,
So the frail beings we would fondly cherish,
Are laid within our bosoms but to perish!

Byron.

Leaving Caen, I chanced to pass by the lunatic asylum, called Maison du Bon-Sauveur; and, yielding to the feeling of interest I have always taken in these establishments, I asked permission to enter, which was granted me.

My interest does not arise from the expectation of finding any elements of romance in the history of these unhappy *aliénés*, for I am assured by those most conversant with the subject, that nothing, generally speaking, can be more common-place; but there has always seemed to me something unusually grand and beneficent in the spectacle of Mind watching the Mindless, with a care that can never hope to be returned by its object, and seldom ever expect to be understood. Nowhere are the blessings of a social state more strikingly manifested than in the care bestowed on those unable to take care of themselves ; and the arrangements by which this is effected are among the noblest exertions of legislative wisdom.

The system now generally adopted through England is that employed here. The influences brought to bear on the patient are entirely of the gentle kind, and the remedies applied to the mental malady are all homœopathic, that is the particular delusion under which he suffers is not thwarted, but scrupulously humoured, and treated as reality. Amuse-

ments, such as dances and concerts, are provided at proper intervals, and the unfortunate lunatics invariably conduct themselves on these occasions with exemplary propriety.

I was much struck with the peculiar gestures of one of the patients. She continually maintained an attitude as if just sprung in terror from a seat—her hands extended apparently to keep off the pressure of a crowd. Occasionally she pressed them hurriedly to her dress—now before, then behind, then below. Again she extended her hands in alarm, while her eyes almost burst their sockets, muttering all the while in low deep accents, "du sang, du sang." I was curious to know if this lady's history furnished any clue to such strange and painful gestures, and to my enquiries the guide said, "Ah! that is poor Madame de Vaubon! Her story is a sad one. I will relate it to you, if you are not already acquainted with it. It will shew you, too," he added, "that not even the authority of Napoleon could stifle the sense of right and honour in the Caennois.

"In the year 1810 the police were informed

that a man named Rascher was intriguing through Normandy in favour of the royal family, and offered a considerable reward for his apprehension. Shortly afterwards Rascher found his way to Caen, and took lodgings in a house belonging to Madame Vaubon. He had been here but a short time when his retreat was discovered by the police.

"A course of extravagance had brought Madame Vaubon into great difficulties, of which the police taking advantage, offered to liquidate all her debts and give her a pension for life, provided she would deliver up her guest. After some little hesitation she consented, and, under the pretext of guiding him to a place where he might obtain a passage to England, led him into a wood where the agents of the government set upon and despatched him.

"As soon as a messenger could reach Paris and return, Toisson, who headed this party, received an appropriate reward of his services. In a few days this leader of the dastardly assassins walked about with the cross of the legion of *honour* at his heart.

"The Caennois, however, did not regard the business in the same light as the emperor. It was not long before Madame de Vaubon's treason against good faith and the laws of hospitality became public, and the strongest feelings of rage and disgust at her conduct everywhere prevailed. A few days afterwards she was imprudent enough to appear at the theatre in a flaunting crimson dress. No sooner was her entrance perceived than a storm of indignation arose on all sides, that could not be repressed.

At first, unconscious of the cause of the disturbance, she kept her seat; but the cries of "A bas la robe rouge, à bas la robe du sang," brought sudden and horrible suspicion that the infamous truth was known; a moment more, and the pit rose *en masse*, rushing towards Madame Vaubon's box, up the front of which several of the most active instantly climbed. The unfortunate woman sprung to the door, but here she encountered a furious crowd, who had selected that way to reach her. In an instant they tore the

obnoxious garment from her back, and but for the speedy interference of the police, would have rent her to pieces. Perhaps," continued my informant, as we left the room, "you would have thought this a milder destiny than that actually awaiting her. From that hour she has been hopelessly mad."

As he uttered the last words, we were opposite the door of an adjoining chamber, which happened to be ajar. Near the window were two figures in deep mourning; one sat motionless as a statue on a high-backed chair, the other knelt before her, clasping the thin passive hands and looking up into the vacant eyes, while she sobbed, oh! how bitterly! "Chère maman, chère maman."

There was something in the sad droop of the head, and the general contour of the kneeling figure not entirely new to me. I felt certain I had seen it somewhere before; pausing for a moment at the door, I looked in, and there, in that face of woe, on which the rays of the setting autumn sun now threw an additional shade, I beheld the countenance I had seen

the day before in St. Peter's Church, upraised to the picture of the crucifixion. I thought then her grief was of that kind whose object is in the grave, but I was mistaken. Those accents—"Chère maman, chère maman," were

> "Words of deeper sorrow
> Than the wail above the dead."

The mother lived to look upon her daughter. Yet oh! there was the anguish: she lived—but loved, heeded, knew *her* no more!

I thought the face of my cicerone expressed some disappointment that I had not discovered more interest in Madame Vaubon's history, but when this new group came before us, and I told him of my rencontre the day before, that expression changed to one of sympathy. And he said, "You are right. It is a mother and a daughter, and I feel more for them than all the other *aliénés* in my charge. You have not yet seen the garden; let us take a turn there and you shall learn what has befallen them." My guide then closed the door softly, and led the way downstairs.

Having descended, we entered a long gravel-

walk, traversing a large well-kept garden behind the house. Here my guide commenced their history to the following effect.

"On the 14th of November, 1809, exactly a month after the treaty of Vienna between France and Austria, I obtained leave to return to my native village *Notre-Dame-de la-Delivrande*, a hamlet about ten miles hence, it being signified to me that, in consideration of my wounds, I should be exempted from further service. In the afternoon of the 15th I reached Caen, and, before sunset, grasped the hands of my old father in his cottage at La Delivrande.

"I found great rejoicings going on in our neighbour's house. A granddaughter had been born to old Pierre d'Anisé, who lived next door. Pierre's only son had come in for one of the emperor's conscriptions a few days after his marriage, and had perished with the gallant Lannes at the sanguinary battle of Essling, May 23rd. The granddaughter, whose christening they now celebrated, was his posthumous child.

"As Marie d'Anisé (so she was baptized) grew up, she won the hearts of all at La Delivrande, she was so beautiful and so good. Every body loved her, and one, as you shall hear, loved her too well. From her earliest childhood she had been the destined bride of Richard Gamache, the son of an old comrade of her grandfather's. She and Richard grew up together, loving each other like brother and sister. With Marie there never was a deeper feeling; she plighted her vows as a thing of course, knowing her friends desired the union. She herself had no wish in the matter.

"Time rolled on. The year 1826 came. Their marriage was to take place Christmas, 1827, when Marie would have reached her eighteenth year. In the month of May, 1826, there came to La Delivrande a young *avocat*, named Arnold; he was the son of a gentleman living in a picturesque château, about half a mile from the village. For the last five years he had been reading for the bar in Paris, and had now come for a few months to the country to recruit his strength in the pure atmosphere of his native home. He had

entered with uncommon ardour into the study of his profession, for which he had a great taste. All his thoughts and energies took that direction, and from the extraordinary zeal and perseverance he displayed, those to whom his education was entrusted, predicted for him a distinguished career.

"But the polarity of the magnet has been changed by a flash of lightning; a few days after Arnold's return Marie crossed his path, and his soul was unfixed from that hour. Farewell now his stedfast aims, his schemes, his ambition. What were their brightest realizations to the new delicious feeling that possessed him? Hitherto he had striven on in lonely selfishness, 'with none to bless him, none whom he could bless.' Suddenly there came another, who held to his lips the intoxicating chalice of a first love. Deep within the current of his dark life, he felt a spirit had begun to live, like the Naiad of the Grecian's dreams.

"And so it was with Marie. The passion she had awakened recoiled upon herself. And before

the autumn leaves began to fall, every thought, every affection of her heart was centred in Arnold; but though she met him often by stealth, never by word or look did Marie betray the secrets of her heart or falsify her plighted vow.

"She may have erred in concealing this from Arnold: but oh! blame her not if she hesitated to break the spell that, once broken, must consign her to life-long misery. Arnold wondered, doubted, hesitated, and at last proffered his suit. She answered evasively, and turned the subject. From time to time Arnold renewed his entreaties, but she ever seemed to listen coldly and evade reply.

"One evening she said, 'I am to be married at Christmas to Richard Gamache.' Arnold started as if a snake had stung him, but immediately recovering himself, he took her hand, raised it to his lips, wished her happiness, turned, and walked quietly to his home. That evening he announced his intention to his father of abandoning the profession of the law, and entering that of the church. He would set out the next morning for Rome to prepare him-

self for the ministry. Arguments were of no avail: Arnold had made up his mind, and nothing could shake his determination. Before the sun rose the following morning La Delivrande was far behind him, and he was many miles on his way to the Eternal City.

"No regard for human sorrow may stay the roll of the seasons or the flight of time. Hopes are crushed and hearts are broken all the same, but the hours speed away. Christmas, 1827, came, and Marie gave her hand to her betrothed. With desperate calmness she went through the ceremony. With admirable fortitude she held up dvring the succeeding years of her wedded life, fulfilling the duties of her position with admirable fidelity. There were some who wondered where all her liveliness and mirth had fled to. I could have told them! 'Twas no longer Marie that we saw, and loved, and called the bride of Gamache; 'twas but a beautiful machine. I knew her spirit—she herself—was far away beyond the Alps, in a cloistered convent of Italy.

"Well—years rolled on as before. Heaven

had sent a daughter to brighten Marie's dark existence. Old Pierre d'Anisé and most of his contemporaries were dead, and I had changed my cottage at La Delivrande for this establishment, of which his majesty had given me the charge. I came here in 1837. About three years afterwards one autumn evening, as I was walking here, the door bell rung, I came to meet the visitors, and imagine my astonishment at seeing the well-known face of Marie; but oh! how changed.

'As by the sickness of the soul—her mind
Had wandered from its dwelling—her eyes
They had not their own lustre, but the look
That is not of this world.
Her thoughts
Were combinations of disjointed things,
And forms impalpable and unperceived
Of others' sight, familiar were to her.' *

Marie was mad!

"I have seen in the course of a long life all the varieties of expression in which pain, sickness, sorrow, and time may paint themselves on the human countenance. I have

* Byron's "Dream."

beheld it distorted on the field of battle—sunken and white in the chamber of death—withered and blighted by the winter of age—but never saw I aught so harrowing as the altered face of Marie. They were the same exquisite features, but utterly blank and expressionless—all the bright intelligence was gone!

"Poor Marie was accompanied by a little girl, about eleven years of age, the very image of herself. The child craved admission for her mother. She was provided with no letters of recommendation; but, I need hardly say, she was received at once, and has never since wanted anything this mournful asylum can bestow. You will have guessed that the two ladies in mourning are Marie and her daughter. There is something supernatural in the attention of the latter to her poor mindless mother. They have now been here seven years, and she has never quitted Marie, except for an hour each day, morning and evening, when she repairs to St. Peter's to pray. It was from her I learned what had taken place at La Delivrande after my departure.

"At the end of the year 1839, the death of the Bishop of Bayeux created a vacancy in that see. A canon of St. Peter's, at Rome, named Mortain, a man of the profoundest learning and most austere piety, was selected for his successor. He arrived at Caen in the beginning of 1840, and, as was customary, proceeded to visit the chapel at Notre-Dame-de-la-Délivrande, previously to his consecration.*

"It was also usual for the bishops elect to hold a confession on this occasion, and Mortain caused it to be signified to the good people of La Délivrande that he would take the confessional chair the next morning. As the clock struck nine, Mortain left the curé's house, and entering the chapel, took his seat in the confessional. Numbers attended to unburden themselves to the holy man. Among the rest came Marie. Pale and sorrowful she knelt under the carved roses,† and with hands meekly crossed on her desolate heart, she began.

* This custom is still observed. An expedition to the chapel of La Délivrande is a necessary preliminary to taking possession of the see of Bayeux.

† It is curious that the origin of this phrase is so gene-

"'Father!'—as she spoke the priest started up suddenly, 'Oh! holy father,' she continued, 'hear me, I pray you, and cast me not away. I have been guilty 'tis true, but you have given absolution before now from greater sins than mine.'

"'Proceed, my child,' replied the priest, 'Twas but the sudden chill of the morning air.'

"'Father,' resumed Marie, 'I am the widow of Richard Gamache, of Délivrande. He died of fever last summer. For twelve years I lived with him, a true and faithful wife, and never wronged him by word or deed. But I was not so good as the neighbours thought me. I gave him my hand but not my heart. Father, I loved another, and that other a priest.'

"'Who?' asked Mortain, eagerly. 'The name?'

"'Doubtless,' replied Marie, 'you have met the holy man at Rome. You could not fail to

rally unknown. When roses were first brought from Italy, they were consecrated as presents from the pope and placed over the goals of the confessionals, as the symbols of secrecy. Hence the phrase "Under the rose."

note him. There is but one *Arnold* in the world.'

"As Marie pronounced these words her confessor uttered a groan of pain.

"'Oh, father!' she exclaimed, clasping her hands wildly together, 'say not there is no hope for Marie. Speak to her of pardon and peace!'

"'My child,' interrupted Mortain, in a troubled voice, 'there is ever pardon and peace for the penitent; by virtue of my sacred commission I absolve you from your sin.'

"'One word more, holy father,' said Marie, speaking with a lightened heart; 'I never breathed to mortal man, least of all to Arnold, the love I bore him. He can never know he still rules all the pulses of my heart, for we shall meet no more; and, freed as I am now from earthly ties, there can be no sin in cherishing his memory?'

"'Daughter, I repeat, you are forgiven.'

"'Once more holy father; you will visit Rome and see Arnold again. My secret is safe with you?'

"'My child, it is; Arnold will never know more than he does now!' So Marie rose and departed.

"Two hours afterwards the widow sat working in her cottage, her child prattling beside her, when the curé's servant rushed in with the intelligence that Father Mortain, the Bishop elect, was in the agonies of death, and had earnestly desired to see Madame Gamache before he died. Amazed and horror-struck, Marie followed the messenger to the curé's house, which was a little apart from the village. She was shewn into a parlour, and, after a moment's delay, the curé advanced from the inner room, dismay painted on his countenance.

"'Madame Gamache,' he said, 'Father Mortain has desired to see you, and I could not thwart his dying wish; but I must break the truth to you. He dies by his own hand—the fatal pistol lies on the table; I trust the report may not have been heard at the village, and we may be able to avoid the dreadful scandal the truth being known may bring upon

us. I think I can trust my servant, and on your secrecy I rely. Now follow me.'

"The terrified Marie obeyed, and found herself beside the couch of the dying man. His head lay in a pool of blood. The ball had passed through the left jaw, carried away the cheek-bone and eye-brow, and severely grazed the temple. He would not allow himself to be touched; advice he would have none.

"It was an awful sight, and Marie grew faint and dizzy. But suddenly she seemed to recover all her forces: she bent her eyes eagerly on the shattered gory features, and, uttering a piercing shriek, dropped on her knees beside the couch. Then seizing one of the cold hands, she pressed it to her heart. Her dizziness and dread were gone. One only feeling filled her soul—fearless and triumphant love! Through all the disfigurement of blood and shattered lineament she recognized Arnold!

"'Behold your confessor, Marie,' gasped the dying man; 'your secret has cost me my life, for I could not live to know you loved me, and were free, and yet could not be mine. I

fondly thought the fast, the vigil, and the scourge had subdued my early affection; but the first accents that reached my ear in the confessional tore away at once the work of years, and left my heart the same as when, fifteen years ago, I quitted La Délivrande in despair. So you loved me, Marie! Oh! that consciousness banishes all pain. It is enough. I bid you now that farewell that is spoken but once on earth, and depart to my dread account. In the eternity that spreads before us, who knows but after centuries of purgatorial penance shall have washed away my guilt, our souls, though in far distant ages, may once more meet again? Farewell, Marie, the mist of death is on my eyes, and I cannot see your face, but place your hand upon my heart that the last throb of life may feel the pressure of your touch.' The curé, who had been stupified with horror all through the scene now roused by the necessity of the moment, hastily advanced and administered extreme unction to the expiring priest, Marie still kneeling by his side. The service finished,

Marie laid her head on his heart, and in a few moments it ceased to beat.

"That evening the widow and her daughter went to bed as usual; but the next morning, when the child strove to rouse her to the duties of the day, she seemed not to hear, and kept gazing on vacancy. The terrified girl ran into the next house and called her neighbour; several others soon joined them, for Marie was still the beloved of La Délivrande. They tried to rouse her, to interest her, to make her speak: but nothing was of use—she never spoke from that hour, nothing has ever roused her; she still continues listlessly gazing at vacancy.

"After some months spent thus at La Délivrande the neighbours advised her removal to this establishment, where they judged rightly her old friend would give her a kind reception.

"You saw the daughter praying at St. Peter's. She has never missed a day for the last seven years. It seems to me a hopeless case; yet who knows but God in his mercy may answer the daughter's agony, and before

poor Marie dies, waken her mind from its long sleep to know how she has been watched, loved, and prayed for."

"It is indeed a mournful story," said I.

"Yes," interrupted my guide, "and though I trust I am a good catholic, I have my doubts about confession. I cannot help thinking there are some secrets our God alone should know."

"That is precisely my opinion," said I, as I pressed his hand and passed out into the street.

CHAPTER III.

NORMAN COIFFURES.—BAYEUX.—CATHEDRAL.—TAPESTRY.—NAPOLEON MAKES USE OF IT.—NO SPINSTERS NOW.

Mit ordnendem sinn
Sie füllet mit schätzen die duftenden Laden
Und dreht um die schnurrende spindel den Faden
Und sammelt im reinlich geglätteten schrein
Die schimmernde wolle, den schneeigen Lein
Und füget zum guten den Glanz und den Schimmer
Und ruhet nimmer.

Schiller.

She sat within her silent bower,
To work white, blue, and red;
In silken tap'stry, leaf and flower,
For chamber, state, and bed.

R. W. Huntley.

THE road from Caen to Bayeux lies through the Bessin, a district included between the rivers Orne and Vire. It forms part of the

Bocage,* the women of which are still faithful to the head-dress of their ancestors. There may be said to be at this day four styles of coiffures in Normandy. There is, first, the coiffure of the Cauchoises, or inhabitants of the Pays de Caux, in Upper Normandy, a head-dress which Hazlitt says the *Spectator* laughed out of England a century ago. Then there is the *bourgogne* or *bavolette*, worn by the women of the Bessin, such as you often see in old pictures of the ladies of the court of Burgundy. These two coiffures bear a close resemblance to each other. They consist of a hollow cylinder of muslin, about five inches in diameter, and generally five diameters high. Sometimes they are worn with a border, sometimes without, but mostly have little wings depending from the bottom over the ears. In the lower part of the Bessin, near the town of Vire, the capital of the Bocage, the up-

* This Bocage is a district, whose limits are ill-ascertained. It is to be distinguished from the *Bocage* of La Vendée, so called in contradistinction to the *Marais*, the part of that country running along the coast. The Bocage forms the interior.

per part of the muslin cylinder expands into a complete bonnet, the *ensemble* forming the most ludicrous coiffure that ever travestied a woman's head. Thirdly, there is the coiffure of the Avranchin, so pretty that one can scarcely imagine it to belong to the same district; but, on close inspection it turns out, though an immense improvement, evidently to belong to the family of head-dresses already described. The *fond* is a little scull-cap, such as forms the basis of the former coiffures, but the yards of muslin, instead of ascending to the clouds, are rolled into something like a *volute* (to use an architectural expression) over each ear, giving the profile the effect of a turban. Lastly, there is the cap now generally worn by the women in the towns, resembling that worn by the women of the lower orders in this country, but of much richer material, and displaying a great deal of lace,—an article in which the Norman ladies are very extravagant. These head-dresses affording no shelter from the sun or wind, the complexions of the wearers are not the best in the world; the loftier kind,

too, are necessarily fastened on the head by a strap passing under the chin, and, as this is not always sufficient to maintain the equilibrium, all the muscles of the face are called to its assistance, and the consequence is that it becomes very early sewed with wrinkles. You rarely, except in extreme youth, see a pretty woman. Some of the children are very lovely. There is an appearance of exuberant health about them, such as is never seen elsewhere. I have heard this attributed to the careful exclusion of sugar, or sweets of any kind from their food.

This dietetic observation will be pardoned for the sake of the nice superstition on which the custom is founded. It is believed that the Virgin Mary takes it upon herself to sweeten the children's food.

* * * * *

Bayeux once possessed a beautiful cathedral, but it has been so patched and added to, that every trace of symmetry and harmony has disappeared; the doors belong to one era, the windows to another, the arches to a third, and

some Norman Inigo Jones has crowned the incongruity by planting a Greek cupola on the centre of the roof.

The great curiosity of Bayeux is the worsted history of the Conquest, now preserved in the public library. You will find this famous tapestry a far livelier and certainly more impartial chronicle than Mr. Thierry's octavos; moreover, you can peruse it in as many quarters of an hour as the other takes days, a consideration of some importance just now, when nobody has any time to throw away.

This extraordinary relic consists of a piece of linen, about two hundred and fourteen feet long, and twenty inches wide, on which that great historical episode is recorded in a series of sketches, fifty-seven in number, worked in thread and worsted. Each sketch is separated from that immediately preceding and following it by a tree or building of the same material. The tapestry is stretched on the back of a glazed case placed opposite the windows. The spectator commences the history

near the door, and walking between the case and the windows, each picture is brought successively into view, till he returns to the door, where the series terminates. The colours are still remarkably vivid, and the execution, though rude, extremely spirited. The view it takes of William's claim to the English crown, is that entertained by all the chroniclers and most historians; for it commences with a sketch representing Edward the Confessor telling William that he is to be his heir. Another compartment depicts Harold swearing his renunciation of the crown on a box of concealed relics, a circumstance that occasioned the Normans to regard his subsequent resistance as adding impiety to treason. Other *tableaux* represent the embarkation and disembarkation of the Norman army, and the history sums up with the battle of Hastings.

The commonly received opinion is, that this tapestry is the work of Matilda, the Conqueror's wife, and her maids. That it belongs to that period there is no doubt—the costumes, the arms, the armour, the buildings, the let-

ters by which each *tableau* is entitled, all are characteristic of the eleventh century. The letters are precisely similar to those upon Matilda's tomb at the Holy Trinity, and in some of the reliefs at St. George de Rocherville we find *fac similes* of several pieces of armour. Some minute details and the frequent introduction of Bishop Odo, brother of the Conqueror, declare it to have been the work of an eyewitness of the recorded events, and one of the family of the principal hero. Mr. Turner's researches seem to have established that this eyewitness was Matilda. Mr. Gally Knight was too enamoured of stone and mortar to yield an easy faith to the current opinion. He remarks upon the escutcheons that are borne by some of the shields, and observes it is generally conceived these were not introduced until a later period. He fancies that the camels and elephants, represented on the border, intend a reference to Esop's fables, which were unknown in England until translated by our learned King Henry I.

With respect to the first objection I would

observe, that, although arms did not become hereditary until the time of Frederic Barbarossa, yet devices on shields were used long before the eleventh century, as is evidenced by many ancient seals, and are said to have been generally adopted at the tournament of 938, held at Magdebourg by the Emperor Henry I. With regard to the elephant and camel border, there is nothing to lead to the inference that Esop's fables are referred to, any more than Mr. Wombwell's menagerie.

This tapestry is the Methuselah of needlework; that is to say, it is the oldest piece of stitchery in the world. Its antiquity and origin render it a highly valuable authority upon the style of costume, arms, armour, &c., of the period, and one of the most interesting monuments extant. It is extraordinary, nevertheless, how little local interest it excites. Ducarel mentions that the monks of the cathedral did not know of its existence, and I met a very intelligent French gentleman, who had travelled all over the world, and was then exploring Normandy, yet had never heard of the tapestry.

This relic has had wonderful escapes. For several years it was knocked about among the lumber of the cathedral, as a piece of very badly executed worsted work. Napoleon had it carried from town to town at the time of his meditated invasion of England, in order to familiarise the French imagination with such an attempt, and to impress upon their minds that he was not the first who made it! He forgot that it was the very event recorded on that tapestry that made his project so hopeless; for that event gave to England, as the future inheritor and guardian of her soil, the unconquered, unconquerable Norman! Since the hour when the white horse gave place to the lion standard, what stranger foot has ever dared to tread her shore, save as a fugitive or a friend?

After this freak of Napoleon, the tapestry was sent to Paris, where it was severely handled and had many holes cut in the ground, but these were cleverly mended, and at the general restitution of stolen goods, which took place in 1815, it was restored to Bayeux.

Oh! those blessed days when there was no shopping, no visits, no assemblies, no operas, to allure the wife from her proper sphere—the hearth of her husband. When, surrounded by her maids, she spent her leisure hours in pourtraying on the canvas the achievements of her lord. The Teutonic women were famous for their skill in needlework, and ladies of the highest quality would often work entire sets of hangings. By an old custom which prevailed among them for a long time, women were prohibited from marrying until they had worked or spun a regular set of bed-furniture. Hence till their marriage they were called *spinster*, and the term has survived the custom to which it owes its origin.

What simple manners, what stedfastly domestic habits, what unwandering desire characterised the age that saw a work like this tapestry begun and finished! The most that is accomplished in this way now is a miserable scrap of tent stitch, or still more miserable bit of crochet, the fruits of an occasional interval snatched from the present public fidgety life of

woman. How many ladies of the nineteenth century would merit the epitaph placed by the Roman widower on the tomb of his wife, as comprising the noblest history of a woman's existence?

"Domum mansit, lanam fecit."

CHAPTER IV.

HAUTEVILLE LE GUICHARD. — CONQUEST OF APULIA AND SICILY BY THE NORMANS.—THE SONS OF TANCRED.

Nous touchons à l'une des époques les plus intéressantes, non seulement de toute l'histoire d'Italie, mais de toute celle du moyen âge, et qui rappelant les temps héroïques de l'antiquité, offre comme elle des couleurs à l'épopée et des sujets au génie dramatique.

ORLOFF, *Memoirs sur Nap.* i. 1.

WE enter the Contentin, half way between Bayeux and St. Lo. Proceeding through the latter town (which offers nothing to detain the stranger), on the road to Coutances, we must turn aside and make a short pilgrimage to the humble village of Hauteville le Guichard. That little hamlet was the birthplace of kings!—not mere hereditary passive recipients of glory and power— not mere crowned heads and sceptered hands, but heroes, who built up their own thrones with head of wisdom, and hand of

strength—kings by the right divine of merit and lofty deeds! We come to another magnificent episode in the history of the Norman race—that brilliant, though evanescent dynasty, which began with the heroic Roger, and ended with the ill-fated Manfred.

Dismounting from my pony, I walked towards an old ruin, not far from the road. It marks the site of a now vanished castle, in the beginning of the eleventh century the residence of a gentleman named Tancred, who, according to the custom of the times, derived his surname from his estate—Hauteville. His family consisted of six sons and three daughters. The feudal law, giving the estate to the eldest son, and the modern contrivances of charges, insurances, and, I may say, personal property, in our sense of the term, being, in those days, unknown, it may be imagined that the prospects of the younger sons were not brilliant, especially as heiresses were nowhere to be found. The patrimonial property, itself, was not very considerable, and by no means commensurate with the aspiring wishes of the heir-at-law, who

responded to the call of destiny with the same alacrity as his younger brethren.

The sons of Tancred were not born to creep contentedly through life—*du lit à la table, de la table au lit*—they were not men to linger in idleness and obscurity at home, while before them lay the fragments of the old Roman world, feeble and disordered, seeming to invite some master-spirit to come forth to conquer and redeem. While they looked anxiously towards Italy, an invitation arrived from their countryman Raynulfus, Count of Aversa, to come out and combine with him in extending the territory he had already made himself master of. In order to comprehend the position of the Normans in Italy at that time, it will be necessary to relate briefly the circumstances which led to their visiting and becoming settled in the South. This relation may not possess the close interest we feel in that of the conquest of our own soil; but it is invested with that general and higher interest which is awakened by great deeds, as such, without any reference to our own participation in them, or their

consequences. The great marvel of this, as of most of the Norman conquests was the immense disparity in numbers between the conquerors and the conquered. In the ninth century, a small band of Normans subjected Russia to their power.* In the tenth century, a few boats' crews of Normans conquered Neustria; and in the eleventh century, at the period with which we are engaged, the astonished world beheld a handful of these same men, mating themselves with the powers of the Western and Eastern Empires, wresting Apulia from their sway, and chasing the Mahomedans out of Sicily. In the gripe of the Norman, the disconnected territories thus acquired became compressed into symmetry, and hardened into strength. The ill-governed principality, the turbulent dukedom disappeared, and the kingdom of the Sicilies arose.

* Their leader was Rurik, from the Swedish side of the Dovrine. They came from a district called Roslagen, whence they were called by the Slavonic tribes they conquered Russians. Rurik seized on Novogorod, and became the founder of the Russian Empire, and ancestor of a long line of kings, ending in Feodor I., 1598.

"L'expédition des Normans en Italie, ne nous offre point ce spectacle, si ordinaire dans les annales de l'histoire, d'un peuple qui, abusant du droit de la force, vient imposer son joug à des populations moins favorisées que lui par le sort des combats. Ce sont quelques chevaliers dont le mâle courage rétrempe l'énergie d'un troupeau d'esclaves amollis par le climat, et avilis par le despotisme. Ces hommes du Nord, animés de cette force morale qui enfante des prodiges, et qui fait les héros, affrontent les premiers, en petit nombre, les phalanges de l'empire d'orient; de la double cime du Vésuve, jusqu'a l'extrémité occidentale des Calabres, les mots magiques, *Victoire* et *Liberté* se sont fait entendre ; ils ont retenti jusqu'aux rives même de la Neustrie, dont ils appellent les fils, et dans les trois vallées de la Sicile, dont ils font trembler les oppresseurs. Bientôt cette île est envahie, et les Mussulmans, obligés de repasser les mers, vont cacher la honte de leur défaite dans les sables de la Libye."*

Let us first consider the political condition of

* Gaultier d'Arc.

Italy at this time. In the year 589, the Lombard chief, Autharis, had won from the Greeks the duchies of Apulia, Calabria, and (with the exception of Naples) Campania, and uniting them all into one government, had fixed upon Beneventum as his capital. His successors became tributary to Charlemagne, and in the year 866, with a view of terminating some differences which had arisen between the elective dukes of Naples, and the princes of Beneventum, Louis II. divided the latter territory into two parts. This was the origin of the principality of Salerno.

Beneventum was still further diminished by Otho, who, taking advantage of the weakness of France under Charles the Bald and Carloman, had subjected the duchy to the power of Germany. As a recompense for the services rendered in one of his wars by the Castalde of Capua, Otho raised him to the rank of prince, and carved a principality for him out of the remains of Beneventum.

Not long afterwards the Greeks having engaged the Saracens as their allies, recovered

their old possessions of Apulia and Calabria. Meantime a religious power had grown up, and, in the midst of all these secular sovereignties, attained to independence and influence.

In one of the most picturesque parts of Italy, on the summit of Monte Casino, St. Benoit had raised a monastery on the ruins of the temple of Apollo, about the middle of the fifth century. In course of time, by virtue of many large donations, the solitaries of St. Benoit became rich and powerful. The whole district of San Germano came into their hands; they obtained a charter from Charlemagne, and having armed their vassals, proclaimed their independence of Lombard, Greek, and German.

Such was the political state of Italy at the end of the tenth century. Apulia and Calabria were governed by catapans* from Byzantium: the principalities of Beneventum, Capua, and Salerno, belonged to the Lombards. The duchies of Naples, Amalfi, and Sarrento, asserted their independence, acknowledging only

* *Catapan* means "over everything;" hence, by a gradual process of corruption, the word *captain.*

a nominal sovereignty in the Great Empire, and the abbot of Monte Casino confessed to no superior save the Holy See.

Having taken a glance at the political condition of Italy, let us now return to the Normans.

At the beginning of the eleventh century, the idea of some great catastrophe penetrated the whole of Europe. It was believed that a thousand years having passed from the Advent, the world drew to a close.* Many terrible natural phenomena contributed to the general apprehension. There were frequent shocks of earthquakes, extraordinary appearances were observed in the sky, taking the shapes of evil spirits, and a comet added its awful splendour. "Men's hearts failed them for fear." Some handed over their possessions to the monasteries; others attempted to propitiate the wrath of heaven by pilgrimages to the Redeemer's tomb. Many of the Norman warriors, filled with the ardour of neophytes, and stricken with

* Many acts and deeds of the time began with these words, "Appropinquante etenim mundi termino."

remorse for the evils done the Church by their ancestors or countrymen, exchanged their armour for the pilgrim's weeds, and, some by land and some by sea, directed their course towards Jerusalem.

It was in the year 1016 that some of these pilgrims returning homeward touched at Salerno. An Amalfitan bark, with a crew of forty persons, was seen entering the bay of Posidonia; nearing the land, they disembarked on those delicious shores where the exiles of Sybaris fixed their abode of old, and were soon recognised by their garb, and the palm-leaves they bore,* to be from the Holy Land.

Gaimar, Prince of Salerno, struck with the noble air the strangers exhibited under their humble garments, received them with honour, and treated them with marked consideration. The grateful Normans longed for some opportunity of testifying their sense of his courtesy; nor was it long before an occasion offered. Scarcely were they rested from the fatigues

* The pilgrims generally brought back palm-leaves from Syria, which they laid on the altar at their native place.

of the journey, when the fleet of the Saracens appeared on the horizon. They disembarked to the number of twenty thousand, and having encamped on the plain separating the city from the sea, sent to Gaimar to demand the usual tribute, with which the Lombards were in the habit of buying off their attacks.

Gaimar had already given orders for levying the sum demanded by the Mussulmen, when Drogo, the leader of the Normans, appeared before him.

"What!" exclaimed he, "are the Salernitans to act like helpless widows?—are they to endure such an outrage from the Saracens? The Christian submitting to the Infidel! No, sire! it shall never be! Only give us arms and horses and you shall see us chastise their insolence."

While the Saracens, thinking they had to do only with the men whom they had so often vanquished, gave themselves up to indulgence and excess, the Normans had doffed their garb of peace, and armed themselves for the fight. The *élite* of the Salernitans, rendered suddenly

courageous by this handful of heroes, formed themselves into a compact band, and, led on by the Norman warriors, fell like a thunderbolt on the infidels.

The attack was so unexpected and so fierce that the Saracens everywhere gave way. Here and there they attempted to rally and oppose a front to the foe, but no sooner was a line formed than it was charged by the fiery Normans. Nothing could withstand the onset of that pilgrim-chivalry. Fresh from the sources of Christianity—the Infidel before them,—in the saddle once more—they felt an ardour that seemed to endue them with the strength and energy of immortals. As they swept on their foaming chargers over the ensanguined field, the terrified Mussulmen fancied they beheld the messengers of some avenging deity, and fled in confusion to the shore, followed by the Norman knights, shouting the Christian war-cry, and mowing them down by hundreds. Those who escaped precipitated themselves into the sea, and swam to the ships, which immediately weighed anchor and sailed away, leaving the

conquerors in possession of their camp, and quantities of valuable spoil.

Gaimar came forth to meet the Normans returning from the battle, and led them with the greatest pomp and honour to his palace. He overwhelmed them with his thanks, and offered them, as a more substantial proof of his gratitude, the most costly presents. He also entreated them to remain at his court, promising them rank and wealth, and all the rewards in his power to bestow.

The Normans, however, declined the prince's gifts, saying that they had fought not for hire, but for their faith, and the love of God;* and to Gaimar's entreaties that they should remain with him, they replied, that after their long absence they yearned to revisit their native land, and must hasten thither; but promised ere long to send the prince some valiant knights, of whom there were many in Normandy equally brave with themselves.

* "Mes li Normant non vouloient prendre merite de deniers, de ce qu'il avoit fait pour lo amor de Dieu."—*Chron. d'Aimé.*

Gaimar finding his guests inflexible, prepared to send them forth with honour. He had some galleys fitted out with great magnificence, and furnished with every luxury of the time, in particular with large supplies of the exquisite fruits of Pæstum.* Moreover, the prince sent several Salernitan officers to the Duke of Normandy charged with costly gifts; silks embroidered with gold and silver, the produce of the Levant, rare weapons of the East, and horse-trappings covered with precious stones. These messengers were commissioned to induce some Norman knights to accompany them back to Italy.

Richard the Good, who then reigned in Normandy, had just refused succours to Etheldred King of England, and not seeing fit to grant to a stranger what he had refused to his brother-in-law, forbade any of his knights to accom-

* Pæstum, anciently Salerno. Bonstellen, cited by Sismondi, p. 279, states that the Northmen were passionately fond of the fruits of the South, and mentions their exquisite flavour, as one of the inducements held out to them to quit Scandinavia, and enrol themselves under the name of Varangians, in the guard of the Eastern Emperors.

pany the envoys of the Prince of Salerno. It happened just then that a Norman, named Osmond, had slain a favourite of Richard's, named Répostel, and to avoid the anger of the duke had fled to England. Returning by Brittany, he fell in with the emissaries of Gaimar, and, having prevailed on his three brothers, Rainolfe, Raoul, and Anquetil de Quarrel, to accompany him, returned with them to Italy.

On their arrival, they went first to the Mount Gargano, to render thanks to St. Michael, the guardian saint of the Normans, for having protected them on their journey. Here they met a Lombard knight of Bari, named Mélès, who had been driven from his home by the tyranny of the Byzantine Catapan, and after being chased by his enemies from one place to another, had come, as a last refuge, to the altar of the Archangel. "And here," exclaimed the Lombard, seeing the Normans moved by his misfortunes, "here I have found redress. On you, valiant gentlemen, depends my return to Bari. Of what avail were the phalanxes of the

East confronted with the Norman chivalry! If you will assist me my success is certain."

Osmond and his brothers, with characteristic gallantry, constituted themselves at once the champions of Mélès, and emissaries were speedily dispatched to Normandy, to call their brother knights to arms for the chastisement of injustice.

The messengers met with a ready response. Weariness of comparative inaction, a love of danger and romance, the prospect of a brilliant fortune,—all these motives seconded the appeal, and numbers hastened to answer Osmond's call. They made their way across the trackless lands of France, infested by brigands, forced a passage over St. Bernard, where they slew some of the still idolatrous natives, who demanded a toll, and before long, on the plains of Southern Italy, planted the red banner* of the children of Rollo opposite the eagles of the East.†

* The Norman banner was red, their national colour.—Rob. Wace, i. 201. At the siege of Antioch the standard of Boemond was the same colour.—Alb. Aqueus, *Hist. Hieros.* p. 246. The oriflamme of St. Denis was also red.

† Rodulph, Chron. tom. x., Hist^{s}. de France.

Mélès, meantime, had been negotiating with his brother chiefs the princes of Benevento, Capua, and Salerno. Allured by the hope of recovering from the Greeks the possessions of their ancestors in Apulia and Calabria, they lent a favourable ear to his solicitations; and when they learned that some of the redoubtable Norman knights were about to range themselves under his banner, they no longer hesitated, but readily furnished contingents to the army of which Mélès had been named the general.

At the opening of the spring, the combined forces put themselves in motion, and met the legions of the Catapan Andronicus, commanded by Leon Pacian, on the Greek frontier, at Arenula. A bloody conflict ensued, and the imperial troops were completely vanquished. They fled, leaving the field in possession of the Lombards and Normans, who followed up their success by advancing on Iremo, Civita, and Bari, and in a short time the whole of Apulia had submitted to Mélès.

Basil had at this time just succeeded to the

sceptre of the East. Young, vigorous, and proud, he resolved to make an energetic attempt to recover his Italian dominions. Accordingly, he raised an immense army, and giving the command to his ablest general, Bogianos, dispatched it to Italy.

From the banks of the Ofanto to the foot of Mount Vulture stretches that plain of fatal memory, where Hannibal annihilated the legions of Rome.* Here, in the month of October, 1019, met the forces of the Greeks and Lombards, and again, as on that disastrous day, Victory forsook her favourite. A panic seized upon the Lombards; as the countless forces of the Byzantines approached, they wavered, broke, and finally fled in confusion, leaving the Normans to bear the whole brunt of the battle. Abandoned by their allies, the Normans never thought of flight, but, preferring death to dishonour, rallied round Osmond, and for a while sustained the unequal contest. At length, wearied with slaughter, Osmond fell, and one by one his brother

* Still called "Il campo di sangue."

knights shared his fate, each dying where he stood.*

When the intelligence of this disaster reached Salerno, the Normans, who were sojourning there with Gaimar, hastened to the support of Mélès, whom, however, fortune seemed to have deserted. He was defeated in two successive battles, and at length withdrew into Germany, where he died shortly afterwards, just as he had prevailed upon the Emperor Henry to espouse his cause.

The Byzantine Emperor perceived that the death of Mélès removed the greatest obstacle to the recovery of his Italian possessions; and he might now hope to profit by the treachery of that general's former allies. After the first defeat of Mélès, Dato, his brother-in-law, had taken refuge with a few troops in the tower of Garigliano, which was in the territory of the Prince of Capua, and under the protection of the Abbot of Monte Casino. Dato was here joined by the few knights who still adhered to Mélès after his defeats, and whom Mélès,

* Chron. d'Aimé, l. i. c. 21.

on his departure to Germany, had confided to the care of his ally, Pandolf, Prince of Capua. Under the double protection of the prince and his brother Atenolphe, the Abbot of Monte Casino, they deemed themselves secure; but they were deceived. On the withdrawal of Mélès into Germany, the perfidious Pandolfe sent the golden keys of Capua to the Emperor of Constantinople. His treachery was rewarded by a large sum of money, and Atenolphe was also bought over by the gift of some estates which had fallen into the hands of the emperor, and formed a handsome appendage to the domains of the Abbey of Monte Casino. A few days after these transactions, the inhabitants of Garigliano were struck with surprise to behold the imperial ensigns under the walls.

Astonished, but undismayed, Dato and his brave companions flew to arms, and for two entire days resisted all the efforts of the besiegers. At length they were forced to yield to numbers. The entire garrison was put to the sword, with the exception of the Norman

knights, for whose ransom Atenolphe had stipulated. The unhappy Dato, loaded with irons and mounted on an ass, was ignominiously conveyed to Bari. There he was shut up in a sack, with some reptiles, an ape, and a cock, and flung into the Adriatic.

These treacherous and cruel proceedings filled the soul of the Emperor Henry with profound indignation, a feeling that was not diminished by a sense of the damaging effect of the Grecian victories on his own influence in Italy. He resolved upon immediate action, and, having levied a numerous army, descended upon Italy. Pepon, patriarch of Aquila, commanded one division, and marched into Apulia; Belgrim, another ecclesiastic, invested Monte Casino, while the third division, commanded by the Emperor in person, laid siege to Troja.

Atenolphe, the abbot of Monte Casino, dreading the chastisement of his treachery, fled from the abbey, and embarked at Otranto, with a view of repairing to Constantinople; but the elements took his punishment into their own

hands. A violent tempest arose; and the murderer was engulphed in the same waves that three months before had closed over his victim, Dato. His brother in treachery, as in blood, Pandolf of Capua, fearful of being betrayed by his subjects, to whom he was an object of detestation, delivered himself up to Belgrim, through whose intercession the sentence of death unanimously passed upon him was remitted, and he was sent in chains across the Alps.

The Emperor appointed a new abbot at Monte Casino, and gave Capua to the Count of Teano.

The Normans had not remained indifferent and inactive during this war, undertaken to avenge the family of their ancient general. The Emperor, sensible of the services they had rendered him, recompensed them in a manner worthy of their courage. When the excessive heat of the season, and the sickness among his troops, forced Henry to retire, he confided to the Normans the task of continuing the war against the Greeks, and entrusted to their care

the three youthful nephews of Dato, upon whom he conferred the title of count.

Gautier de Canisy, Gosman, Hugh Faloch, Toustain Scitel, Balbe, and Stigand, with eighteen of their companions, formed themselves into a guard to the young counts, whom for some time they attended with great fidelity; but, their services being repaid only by ingratitude, they resolved to proclaim their independence. Summoning their brother Normans from Capua and Beneventum, they formed a confederation, of which they appointed Toustain Scitel the chief. Toustain was pre-eminent among them for strength and courage; and the Norman and French chroniclers have attributed to him the most incredible exploits. He died, however, a short time after his election, and the confederates then chose one of Toustain's brothers in arms as their leader.

The year 1025 was marked by the death of the two princes whose existence most influenced the destinies of Italy, Basil and Henry.

The Grecian empire, no longer sustained by the vigorous arm of Basil, experienced all the

miseries of a government at once weak and cruel, under Constantine, his brother; to whom, on Basil's death, the sceptre devolved. He was incapable of extending his attention beyond the limits of his immediate territories; and for the present Italy was no more thought of. Duke Conrad, the successor of Henry, had liberated Pandolf of Capua, at the instances of his brother-in-law, Prince of Salerno. Pandolf, on his arrival in Italy, commenced operations in conjunction with Gaimar of Salerno, to depose the Count of Teano, to whom Henry had given his principality. The Normans, whose good understanding with Gaimar had never been interrupted, could not refuse their aid during this struggle, which lasted eighteen months. After a long resistance, the Count of Teano obtained an honourable capitulation, and retired with his family into Naples, of which little republic Sergio was president.

Pandolf, not contented with recovering his possessions, and encouraged by his success, required Sergio to deliver up his rival, whose vicinity caused him some inquietude. The posi-

tive refusal of Sergio to violate the rights of hospitality brought on a rupture between him and Pandolf. The Count of Teano fled to Rome, where he died; and Sergio, unable to oppose the superior power of Pandolf, was forced to Naples. After three long years of exile he implored the assistance of those valiant knights, to whom the oppressed never appealed in vain, whatever the colour of their banners. The Normans had rendered their assistance to their old ally, Gaimar, in re-instating Pandolf on the throne of his ancestors; but they hesitated not to turn their arms against the latter when he unjustly possessed himself of the territory of the republic. By their assistance Sergio in a short time was restored to power. Nor did he prove himself ungrateful.

From Capua to the foot of Vesuvius there spreads a plain, whose softly-undulating surface has presented for two thousand years a spectacle of inexhaustible fertility. Numerous fig-trees, and pale-green olives, supply at once their fruits and their shade. The vine, clinging to the

poplar and the ash, spreads its joyous festoons over the ever-blooming flowers, and frequent thickets of orange and citron intoxicate the air with odour. Such was this delicious plain when Virgil sang;* such is it to-day. In the centre of this plain were placed the limits of the Principality of Capua, and the Duchy of Naples. Sergio, suspicious of the dispositions still entertained towards him by his neighbour Pandolf, was anxious to fix his brave defenders in his territory. With this view he offered them a grant of land on the borders of the principality, gave their leader Raynulfus his daughter in marriage. The Normans then united and built the town of Aversa on the territory granted by Sergio, and Raynulfus received the title of count. From this time dates the first sovereignty of the Normans in Sicily.

At the edge of the plain they had selected rose the craggy Appenines, from whose steep sides the Samnites of old had so long rolled back the Roman war; where also Fabius baffled the Carthaginian general, and where Mélès,

* "Illa tibi lætis intexet vitibus ulnos."

with the shattered remains of his army, took refuge, after the disastrous battle of Cannæ.

In an age of insecurity and war, it would have been the policy of most people to have selected such a spot for the site of the capital of their newly-acquired territory. But not so felt the Normans; their swords and strong arms were rampart enough for them: and thus it was, that with characteristic contempt of danger, these men raised their first citadel, among the citron groves and flowers of Campania.

CHAPTER V.

HAUTEVILLE LE GUICHARD.—THE SONS OF TANCRED.—KINGS OF SICILY.—LOVE THE KING-MAKER.

Nel scuole del amor che non s'apprende.

Tasso.

The gentle voice says, "Why wert thou so hazardous?"
The deeper-toned replies, "For thee!—for thee!"

Landor.

THE Normans being thus definitely settled in Italy, were desirous of inducing some of their countrymen to join them. Accordingly, Raynulfus dispatched thither some trusty messengers, who were to represent the advantages of the country they had won, and the brilliant prospect that awaited the enterprising and the brave.

In executing their mission, the messengers came to Hauteville. In the soft valley of La Cave stood the feudal castle of Tancred, whi-

ther, after having visited foreign courts and served in the body-guard of Richard the Good, the aged knight had retired to spend his last years on his ancestral soil. Here they found him surrounded by his family, which, as I have said, consisted of twelve sons and three daughters. The sons had received the education common to the upper classes in those days. They were skilled in hawking, in the use of arms, and in that especial Norman accomplishment, horsemanship.* Their lofty bearing and air of dignity seemed to presage the brilliant destiny awaiting them; and, if we may believe the testimony of one of the most esteemed historians of Sicily, those who were ignorant of their parentage would not have said they were brothers, but chosen individuals, selected from the whole world, to exercise dominion over men.†

The eldest son, Serlon, having killed a courtier of Duke Robert's in a fit of passion, had been banished into England, but hearing

* Geff. Malat. l. i. c. 3.

† Fazel. Post. decad., l. iii. c. 7.

that the duke had undertaken the cause of Henry of France, he ventured to pass over, to share the fortune of his countrymen. He joined the duke's forces in disguise, at the siege of Tillières. During the investment of this place, a knight came forth each morning to invite a Norman to combat. Already many had accepted the challenge and fallen. Serlon, however, resolved to measure his strength with this redoubtable foe, and without informing any one of his intention, presented himself at the dawn of day before the gates of the town. In a few minutes his adversary, in glittering armour, and on a fiery charger, came forth to meet him. The conflict was long and fierce, but finally, a vigorous blow from Serlon brought his enemy to the ground. He then cut off the head of his foe, and, fixing it on his lance, returned to the camp. There, with his vizor still lowered, he rode silently through the ranks, carrying aloft the bloody trophy, amid the cheers of his compatriots.* Duke Robert summoned the unknown knight, and requested

* Geff. Malat. l. i. c. 29.

him to make himself known. When the latter raised his vizor, and Robert recognised the exiled Serlon, he embraced him warmly, received him again into favour, and retained him at his court, where he remained until the invasion of England, whither he accompanied William the Conqueror, Duke Robert's son.*

The renown acquired by Serlon, excited the emulation of his younger brothers; but as the war of France terminated soon after, Normandy seemed no longer to offer any opportunity of distinction. Accordingly, they turned their thoughts towards the land where their countrymen had already won themselves a name, and were meditating an expedition thither at the very time that the invitation arrived from Raynulfus. It was eagerly accepted, and three of Tancred's sons, William, Drogo, and Humphry, immediately set out for Italy, and directed their course to the old ally of the Normans', Gaimar of Salerno. At the moment of their arrival, the court of Byzantium, hoping to take advantage of the divisions among the Saracens, and to

* De Gerville, Mem. sur le Chat. de Hauteville.

recover their ancient appanage, were organising an expedition to invest it under the command of Maniaces. An offer was made to the Normans to join the expedition. 'Twas true that they were invited to make allies of their ancient enemies, the Greeks, but the Normans could not resist the temptation of danger to be encountered, and infidels to combat, and they agreed to join the expedition. Choosing as their leader, William, the eldest son of Tancred, they crossed the straits in conjunction with Maniaces. Then, "red gleamed the cross and waned the crescent pale." The Mahommedans everywhere gave way. Syracuse first fell into their hands, and William gained the surname of Bras de Fer, having, with one blow of his spear, transfixed the governor. Town after town was wrested from the Saracens. The Norman prowess was irresistible; on many occasions they retrieved the fortune of the day, when the Greeks had given up all as lost. By their assistance Maniaces was enabled to accomplish every object of his expedition; but he now, with characteristic

want of faith, refused to make good his engagements, and the Normans, resolving to punish his falsehood, recrossed the straits, entered the Byzantine territory of Calabria, and in a short time rendered themselves masters of all the principal cities. Three armies sent against them by the emperor were successively defeated. Finally, he thought it advisable to negotiate for peace, and an armistice was concluded, on terms highly advantageous to the Normans. A large territory was ceded to them, and William Bras de Fer was elected their chief magistrate, with the title of Count of Apulia. A council was there summoned, who proceeded to frame laws and organize a legislative body. Melfi was declared the capital and the seat of the legislature.

And here let me remark, in passing, the strong tendency to institutions that ever characterised the Norman race. A tendency, as I have before observed, strongly indicating the profound sentiment of perpetuity, inherent in the Norman mind, to which everything was valueless, that shared not in some degree its

own enduring character. Abhorrent alike of despotism and licence, they imparted this love of institutions wherever they came. In their days the world was passing through a fierce ordeal; a stern necessity lay on the whole system of things, a necessity which may be expressed in this brief formula—the sword. In their several missions, if I may so speak, the Normans were forced to use the appointed instrument of the hour: but the readiness with which the sword was sheathed, the facility with which the soldier changed into the citizen, shews how deeply they felt that a state of hostility, bloodshed, and disorder, could not be the normal condition of man. And so we see them pass at once from the battle-field to the council-chamber. The fierce warrior of yesterday is the thoughtful legislator of to-day. The first interval of repose was ever employed in devising means for giving stability to their acquisitions, and a constitutional form to the society in which they were to be vested. Among the Teutons, such a task was never referred to the wisdom of any one leader, however successful;

any oligarchy of chiefs, however eminent. I have already shewn that, from time immemorial, the provisions from which their laws were derived, and on which their societies were based, were the emanations of free public opinion. Their armies were triumphant, because the soldier yielded up his will implicitly to his general; their societies were vigorous and stable, because, when the soldier became a citizen, he resumed that will again. No sooner had conquest and peace transmuted the army into a society, than the dominant sentiment appeared, the sentiment of rational independence; resulting, as the community formed, in liberal institutions.

William enjoyed his honours but a short time. He died a year after he became Count of Apulia, and his brother Drogo succeeded. Drogo fell a victim to a murderous conspiracy of the Lombard nobles; but Humphry, the third brother, immediately assumed the reins of government, and the Norman power remained unshaken. At this period two other sons of Tancred de Hauteville, Robert and

Hubert, came to join their victorious countrymen, and just as they arrived, a hostile league, which had for some time been preparing against the Normans, was matured.

Leo IX. had been persuaded to regard the new-comers as dangerous enemies; acting on the old policy of the Vatican, he turned northwards for assistance, and called on the emperor Henry III. to aid him in expelling them. Henry, in answer to his application, dispatched an army, of which his holiness took the command in person. Having tried negotiations in vain, the Normans met him at Civitella; and though vastly outnumbered by the united forces of the empire and the church, under the conduct of their leaders, Humphry and Robert, they were irresistible. The result was the total rout of the Germans, and the pope remained in their hands. The treatment he experienced was far different from what he either expected or deserved. Instead of treating him as a captive, the Normans reverently desired his blessing, and demanded pardon for having borne arms against him. They then conducted

him with honour to Benevento. Leo, touched with this generous and unexpected conduct, discovered his gratitude by confirming all the Norman conquests, and entering into a friendly alliance.

Humphry busily employed the interval of repose which followed this success in establishing order throughout Apulia, while Robert turned his arms into Calabria, the conquest of which he speedily effected. The former shortly afterwards died, and Robert found himself without a competitor for the power he was so well fitted to wield. In 1056 he was proclaimed Duke of Apulia, and in 1059 Nicholas II. confirmed him in all his titles and possessions, in return for a solemn engagement on his part to become the defender of the church: and here we find this son of a Norman gentleman holding unquestioned sovereignty over the whole south of Italy, whither a few years before he had come in the guise of a pilgrim, attended only by his brother.

Rumours of these great doings had reached

Hauteville from time to time, where Roger, Tancred's youngest son, was still "all restlessly at home." His heart was fired with desire to emulate his brother's career, but his father's declining years demanded awhile his presence and his care. When he looked on those grey hairs he felt that, even for the warrior, there were prior claims to those of glory. But the hour came at last—he laid the old man peacefully in his grave, and, his last tie to Hauteville broken, bade adieu to his birthplace, and accompanied by his mother and sisters, set out for Calabria. Here he arrived just as his brother Robert had established his power over Southern Italy. Roger was immediately invested with a separate and important command, where his high qualities soon made him so popular that Robert's jealousy was awakened, and a great coolness arose between the brothers. Prudence, however, warned the latter that it was better to keep on good terms with Roger, and Robert put an end to their estrangement by conferring on him Melito and the western portion of Calabria.

A marriage which was set on foot and shortly after solemnized between Robert and Sikelgayta, a daughter of the Prince of Salerno, contributed not a little to the consolidation of the duke's power. The famous Boemond, who was afterwards Prince of Antioch, was his son by a former wife.

Let us now return to Sicily. When the Normans had withdrawn, the Byzantine general found himself unable to cope with the Saracens, and the court of Constantinople, irritated at his repeated failure, issued his recall. In a brief time all that had been won from the Saracens had fallen back into their hands; and having shaken off the rule of the Egyptian kaliphs, they enjoyed a transitory independence; but soon beginning to quarrel among themselves, the weaker party sent to the peninsula to invoke the assistance of the Norman leaders. They readily responded to the call. The duke joined Count Roger at Melito, and they prepared to cross the straits. A large fleet was despatched by the Saracens of Palermo to intercept their passage. Ro-

bert, with that characteristic caution that had won him the surname of Guiscard, thought it prudent to postpone the attack, but Roger could not restrain his impetuosity. Evading the Palermitan cruisers, he passed the channel during the night, and morning's dawn beheld the standard of the cross waving from the walls of Messina. Robert now also crossed the straits, and joined his forces to those of Roger. Their united strength amounted only to seven hundred men; nevertheless, the two brothers advanced into the island, and encountering the Saracens, who numbered fifteen thousand strong, put them completely to the rout. Some disturbances which at this time took place in Calabria, recalled the duke to Italy, and Count Roger was left to pursue his career alone. Victory continued to attend him. He acquired an enormous quantity of spoil; town after town fell into his hands as he advanced, and Christmas saw him in possession of Traina.

On his way to Italy Roger had passed a few days at the priory of St. Evroult. The prior's

sister Eremberga was at this time on a visit to her brother, and assisted him in doing the honours to their host. "Amor al cor gentil ratto s'apprende;" the Norman became deeply enamoured of Eremberga. How could he help it? she was very beautiful, and, in her novice's costume, irresistible. Nor did Roger love alone; he bore with him to the plains of Italy the rapturous assurance that he commanded the devotion of a heart on which the world had never breathed. To that assurance who shall say how much he owed? how much of his brilliant destiny hinged upon that hour when he first learned that he was loved? There was now a meaning in ambition—there was now something to strive for—something, without which fame is a delusion, the world's homage a mockery, and glory but an idle name. "*To deserve her!*" has been the silent motto of many a hero's heart; the talisman whose spell has converted obstacles into paths to power, and made difficulties the steps to thrones. Let a man be endowed by nature with energy, courage, and perseverance, let chance furnish fitting opportunities,

and if he unite himself to some great object we may expect it to be attained; but assure a man that his love is answered by some noble heart, and you endue him at once with all those qualities; he will create the opportunities that fortune denies; he is at the same time impelled towards the highest objects and given the capacity to reach them. Talk not of armies and councils, of conquerors and statesmen; the true founder of empire is Woman's Love.

The Prior of St. Evroult, Robert de Grentesemil, had incurred the displeasure of William the Conqueror, and, deeming it prudent to withdraw for a while, he quitted Normandy, and, accompanied by his sister Eremberga, directed his course to Calabria. While Count Roger was keeping the Christmas at Traina, he learned the arrival of the prior and his sister at Mileto. Thither he hastened, and shortly afterwards the lovers were united.

In the year 1064, Count Roger and his wife returned to Traina. Leaving Eremberga there, he proceeded to prosecute his conquests in Sicily. Meanwhile the Greek townspeople of

Traina became discontented; leaguing with the Saracens, they took possession of the town, and laid siege to the citadel. The count, returning hastily, threw himself into the fortress, where the Normans suffered a severe siege for four months, and were reduced to the utmost extremities. Count Roger, however, always on the alert, seized an unguarded moment, and favoured by a dark night, made a vigorous sortie. The besiegers were everywhere repulsed, and the Normans found themselves again masters of the place.

The count's army had suffered so severely on this occasion, that he was obliged to return to Calabria for reinforcements. Eremberga had displayed such skill and courage during the siege, that Roger left her in command of Traina. She shewed herself worthy of the trust; directing the places where the sentinels should be stationed, giving the watchwords, and going herself the rounds of the walls every night to ascertain that they kept their posts. Count Roger having recruited his forces, returned to Sicily, and advanced towards

Palermo. Just at the time that his countryman, Duke William, was leading the Norman forces to the battle of Hastings, Roger, with his troops, met the whole Mahommedan power at Miselmiri. Their usual success attended the Normans. The Saracens retreated into the capital, leaving all their baggage to the victors.

Duke Robert had now reduced Calabria to tranquillity, and joining his brother, they advanced to attack Palermo. After a siege of brief duration, the Saracens offered to lay down their arms, on condition of being allowed to retain their laws, religion, and property. These were not terms to which every victor would have acceded, but the Normans, averse to unnecessary bloodshed, accepted the proposal. They then entered the town in triumph. After this, Duke Robert returned to Calabria, leaving his brother the whole of Sicily save Palermo, with whose beauty he was so captivated, that he could not make up his mind to its sacrifice. Henceforward Roger assumed the title of Count of Sicily.

The son of the Greek Emperor, Michael,

had married Robert's daughter. Michael being dethroned by Nicephorus, applied to his son's father-in-law. Nicephorus, in his turn, having been dethroned by Alexis, had recourse to the Norman too. The duke at once declared himself for Michael. His daughter's wrongs, afforded him an opportunity for which he had long been seeking, and the dazzling diadem of Constantinople rose before his eyes. He met Alexis in battle, and so completely routed his army, that the emperor scarce saved himself by flight. Intelligence just then received from Italy, precluded him from following up his success. He learned that Henry IV., taking advantage of the absence of the Norman duke, and burning to avenge the shame of Canossa, had made his way to the walls of Rome, and forced Gregory VII. to take refuge in the Castle of St. Angelo. Hildebrand implored the aid of the Champion of the Church. Leaving his son Boemond to command, Robert hurried back, and fresh from the defeat of the Emperor of the East, the son of Tancred beheld the Emperor of the West flying before

him. Henry raised the siege with precipitation, and Guiscard conducted the Pope in triumph to Rome.

Meantime Boemond carried everything before him in Epirus and Thessaly. The Emperor Alexis applied to Venice, and the republic was prevailed on to send a large fleet to his assistance. It so happened that Guiscard, on his way from Italy to rejoin his son, encountered the Venetian fleet, after it had effected a combination with the fleet of the Greeks; a battle ensued, which terminated in the entire destruction of their united armament. There was nothing now between Duke Robert and the imperial throne except — the grave! He was seized at Cephalonia with a burning fever, and in six days was no more.

The last Sicilian fortress had now fallen into the hands of Roger, and Robert's son having succeeded his father, the year 1090 beheld under the sovereignty of the sons of Tancred de Hauteville, more than constitutes the present kingdom of Naples.

About this time Urban II. came over to

ask the count's advice respecting an invitation he had received to attend an eastern council. The pope took this occasion to press upon Roger the duty of some severe measures towards his heretical Sicilian subjects. He was met by a flat refusal. With characteristic liberality of spirit, the count declined to constrain the religious opinions to any of his people. He consented only to found Roman Catholic establishments, and place Roman Catholic bishops in the principal cities, insisting, however, on retaining the nomination and investiture. This was an awkward point for the pope, but the difficulty was got over by making Count Roger and his successors hereditary legates of the Roman See. Shortly afterwards, having gone to assist his nephew in a revolt, he was taken ill at Melito, and there, in 1101, the "Great Count" died.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SONS OF TANCRED. — THE KINGS OF SICILY. — THE PROTESTANTS OF THE MIDDLE AGES. — THE DEATH OF MANFRED.

Where are the great in might, the grand in soul?
Gone, glimmering through the dream of things that were,
First in the race that led to glory's goal
They came, and passed away.—Is this the whole?

Childe Harold.

On the death of the "Great Count" Roger, his son of the same name succeeded him. His cousin, the Duke of Calabria, having died childless, Roger repaired to the capital, with the view of asserting his claim as next heir to the dukedom. Most of the barons sent in their allegiance, but the Pope, enraged that he had not been referred to, to confirm the Count's pretensions, resolved to oppose them, and, as a first step, placed him under the ban of ex-

communication. He then levied an army, and, joined by a numerous force of allies, summoned to support the church, advanced against Count Roger.

The count was entirely unprepared for this resistance to his claims, upon the justice of which he had relied more than on force of arms. Compared with the multitude of his enemies, the troops who accompanied him were but a handful; yet, nothing daunted, he prepared to meet them,—strong in his cause, and counselled by the spirit of his race, which never reckoned numbers in the day of battle. On they came, countless as the army of Sennacherib. Like the army of Sennacherib they melted away. A pause in their advance gave time for reflection. A sense of the injustice of their undertaking arose among the papal forces; by degrees the principal leaders withdrew with their troops, and at last, before a blow was struck, the whole army disbanded. The barons came and did homage to Count Roger, and peace was restored.

The count then called together a council of

the chiefs, the bishops, and delegates of the people. By their unanimous vote it was decided that Roger should assume the title of king, and on Christmas day, 1130, he was crowned with great magnificence at Palermo.

Roger now turned his thoughts to legislation. As a guide to his labours in this direction, he collected from different countries their respective laws: having adopted such provisions as were best suited to the country and people he was called to govern, having revised and digested them, he built upon this foundation a system of jurisprudence which was submitted to and sanctioned by his parliament.

An insult offered to the king's ambassador at Constantinople, brought out a Sicilian fleet, which, capturing several towns of the Greeks, advanced to their capital and demanded redress. On an apology being tendered the fleet was withdrawn, and returning thence it encountered a Byzantine armament, into whose power Louis the Seventh had fallen. His liberation was insisted on by the Sicilian admiral, and the Greeks dared not refuse.

Prosperity and success seemed to wait upon every measure of King Roger's. Under his rule Sicily found itself the most tranquil, the most prosperous, and richest state of the time; but this outward glory was heavily balanced by successive domestic sorrows. His first wife lived a very short time after her marriage; a second died in a few years; one by one his children were called away, and when the king himself died, at the age of fifty-nine, the youngest son, William, alone remained to succeed him.

While his elder brothers lived, William's education had been much neglected, and he himself treated with indifference. Men seldom outlive the nursery, and William never recovered this treatment. The neglected boy became the indolent, careless, and morose monarch. But it seemed as though nothing had power to paralyze the essential vigour of the Norman blood; on a great emergency, he would rouse himself, and, flinging aside the trammels of his individual nature, prove to the world that, though dormant, the spirit of his race

was not extinct within him. The emergency past, he relapsed again into apathy, and the strong individuality resumed its sway.

The first act of William's reign was to dismiss all the wise and good men by whom the councils of King Roger had been attended, and to fill their places with the most worthless intriguers. He soon became extremely unpopular, and frequent revolts took place. The Peninsula now rose in arms against him. The usual combination was formed, consisting of the Apulian and Calabrian nobles, the forces of the eastern and western emperors, and the pope with his double strength—his temporal arms and spiritual power.

Suddenly the Norman woke within King William. He flew to arms, threw himself across the straits, and burst suddenly upon the formidable league. Amazement seized upon the assembled hosts. Wholly unprepared for this unwonted and tremendous energy, they fled in all directions. The Byzantine general was taken prisoner, and the chief leader slain, while Adrian IV. hurried back to his Seven

Hills, and there, with trembling hand, put his signature to a treaty couched in such terms as the victorious Norman chose to dictate.

Almost before the treaty had left the Lateran, King William had recrossed the straits, and shut himself up in his palace. There, abandoned to luxury and indolence, he dreamt away the hours, while the concerns of his kingdom were consigned to the most worthless creatures, whom he had admitted to his confidence.

Such a conduct naturally provoked constant rebellions. King William was more than once summoned from his voluptuous lethargy by revolts of the barons on the Peninsula. Each time he seemed to throw off his nature for the hour, and while the occasion lasted, advanced into comparison with any of his predecessors, but the moment it had passed, he sank into his habitual effeminacy and sloth. After the last of these occasions, William, whose conduct had invested him with the title of "The Bad," retired to his palace, where he shut himself up, giving strict orders that

his luxurious privacy should not be intruded upon by any affairs of state. In that ignoble seclusion he died.

That there was sorrow for him, we need not be surprised, for even the grave of Nero had its tributary flowers:* nor is there less truth than poetry in the sentiment — "Ah! surely nothing dies but something mourns." Yet, how shall we account for the fact, that the death of William the Bad was followed by days of the wildest lamention? Noble matrons clothed in sackcloth, and with dishevelled hair, wandered weeping through the streets of Palermo, while the populace made the air resound with cries of sorrow, with which the beat of muffled drums kept up a sad accord. How shall we account for this?

* When Nero perish'd by the justest doom
That ever the destroyer yet destroy'd,
Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,
Of nations freed, and the world overjoy'd,
Some hands unseen strew'd flowers upon his tomb:
Perhaps the weakness of a heart not void
Of feeling for some kindness done when power
Had left the wretch an uncorrupted hour.

Byron.

—Another of the great race was no more! The character of the individual was absorbed in the halo enveloping the Norman line.

William left his wife Margaret Regent of Sicily, his only surviving son, William, being a minor.

As a counteraction to the evil councillors who had surrounded the late king, and whom she found it impossible to dislodge, Margaret invited over from France her cousin, son of the Count of Perche, and nominated him her chancellor. He proved himself an able and virtuous minister, but his virtues and abilities only rendered him the more unpopular with the late monarch's favourites, and he was soon compelled to return to France. The next chancellor was an Englishman, named Walter, whom Henry II. of England had sent over to Sicily to negociate a match between his daughter, Joan, and the young king. The penetration of the latter, now arrived at years of discretion, apprised him of the worth of the Englishman, and he was fortunate enough to secure his permanent services. By virtue of his wise

counsels, the nation advanced rapidly in prosperity, and the historian has nothing to record but a series of actions on the part of the young king, all tending to the peace and happiness of his subjects. During his brief reign the Sicilian kingdom enjoyed comparative repose; but though the sword was more rarely drawn, the arm was not unnerved, and when called upon by the Pope, as the hereditary champion of the Church, to protect him against Frederick Barbarossa, King William hastened, with characteristic good faith, to keep the promise which his fathers had made. The world saw that their spirit dwelt within him, while the Genius of Victory came as of old to wait upon the Norman's career.

King William II. had unhappily no children, and desirous to secure the tranquillity of his people, by placing in power a hand strong enough to control the turbulent barons, he projected that alliance which was attended with such fatal consequences. By his advice, Constantia, his father's sister (a posthumous daughter of King Roger's), gave her hand to the

son of Frederick Barbarossa. Having seen the marriage solemnized, and having, as he conceived, secured the peace of his kingdom by exacting an oath from his subjects to recognize Constantia as the legitimate sovereign of Sicily, William the Good was summoned to his rest at the early age of thirty-six.

It is surprising to think how much this man effected before reaching that age at which the human career ordinarily commences. Great things have no doubt been done before that time in the world of genius and imagination, —by Raphael, by Pascal, by Burns, by Byron, — but in those departments of human effort where the laurels are to be gathered on the paths of teaching and experience, how rarely has anything been achieved before the *mezzo cammin* is attained.

Warned by his father's example, William had no favourites. The sagacity with which he selected always the fittest agent for command and power, was equal to that of Napoleon. Like our Edward I., he thought less of conquest than of maintaining the honour and peace

of his country. His fleets were as successful as those of England under George III.; his armies never knew defeat or check. The Sicilian police was as perfect as that of Normandy under Rollo, so much so, that it was said, "In the time of William II. there was more security in the thickets of Sicily than in the cities of other kingdoms."

On William's death, the important question of the succession arose. To settle this a parliament was summoned at Palermo. The feelings of the Sicilians were almost unanimously in favour of Tancred, Count of Lecce, grandson of King Roger. These were strenuously opposed by Chancellor Walter, whose English heart revolted at this breach of faith towards their departed monarch. He poured forth indignant remonstrances, reminding the Sicilians of their solemn oath to support Constantia as the sovereign of Sicily; but in vain; the voice of the Englishman was lost in the consenting votes of the Sicilians, and Tancred was appointed King of Sicily.

Setting aside the point of good faith, this

choice was a good one. The occasion demanded a ruler of more than ordinary firmness and energy of character, and Tancred proved himself worthy of the race whence he sprung.

Peace had fled with the unquestioned rights of William, and the whole territory was convulsed. To add to the confusion, the crusaders came to winter at Sicily. During their stay there was no end of misunderstandings, and, in particular, Cœur de Lion's fiery temper made him a very troublesome guest. The approach of spring, however, freed Tancred from his visitors, and he was thus enabled to turn his endeavours to appease the unhappy divisions between the Saracens and Christians.

Tancred's great struggle was at hand; the first-fruits of the well-intentioned but unwise policy of William the Good. Henry, the husband of Constantia, descended from his German dominions to enforce the rights of his wife. The king had no force sufficient to meet the Germans in the field, and city after city fell into their hands; but they were arrested at Naples. Here so determined a resistance took place, that

the emperor came to the resolution of withdrawing his troops and retiring into Germany again. He left Constantia at Salerno. Tancred took advantage of his departure; in a short time all the captured towns were recovered, and Constantia, being taken prisoner, was conveyed with the utmost respect to Rome.

Apulia was now once more at rest, and Tancred returned to Sicily, where, in the society of his son, a most amiable and accomplished person, he hoped to pass the remainder of his days in peace. But the "gods loved"* the "young" Duke of Apulia—he was suddenly taken away. To use a homely but forceful expression, Tancred never held up his head afterwards, and followed him to the grave in a year, leaving his queen Sybilla regent, and one son only surviving, an infant.

The star of Sicily was now waning, soon to set in blood. Henry VI. hearing of Tancred's death, and, finding his only opponents a woman

* Ὸν οἱ θεοὶ φιλοῦσιν ἀποθνήσκει νέος.
Τὸ γὰρ θανεῖν οὐκ αἰσχρὸν, ἀλλ' αἰσχρῶς θανεῖν.
Rich. Franc. Phil. Brunck. Poetæ Gnomici, p. 231, ed. 1784.

and a child, again crossed the Alps, descended into Italy, and passing the Straits, was crowned at Palermo. Obtaining possession of the persons of the queen and Tancred's son by an act of the most disgraceful treachery, he threw them both into prison, and had the eyes of the latter put out.

This cruelty, added to the tyranny of the viceroy, roused the Sicilians, who took counsel together how they might deliver themselves from the German yoke. Henry, receiving intelligence of their proceedings, returned suddenly to Sicily, and put to death, without distinction of sex or age, the most illustrious inhabitants, and numbers of the humbler classes. But death happily rid them of the monster. The emperor died, and Constantia, repairing to Palermo, endeavoured by her kindness to the Sicilians, and by ordering the German authorities to quit the island, to banish the remembrance of her husband's atrocities.

The famous Frederic II. was her son. He was brought up at Palermo, and ever entertained the greatest affection for the place. He

built a magnificent palace, and adorned it with treasures sought from all parts of the world. Every clime furnished plants and flowers for his gardens, and in the grounds were collected the birds of every land. Here he summoned round him the men of letters, the musicians, the poets of the time; and Dante and Petrarch bear witness that in this delicious retreat was born the Italian muse.

Time and space would fail me were I to attempt to describe the character of Frederic II.—the distinguished man of his age. A keen sportsman, an ardent student, unrivalled in feats of arms, and a profound philosopher, an accomplished troubadour, a sagacious legislator. It is remarkable that he established on a solid basis the lower house (*il bracchio demoniale*) of the national council in Sicily, just about the time that Henry the Third is said to have laid the foundation of our House of Commons in England. His attainments as a linguist ought not to be omitted. According to the estimate of Charles the Fifth, he was worth six men in this respect alone,

speaking that number of languages with fluency. In an age of narrow principles and bigoted views, he possessed a largeness of soul that honourably distinguished him from his contemporaries. This liberality of mind, however, led him to take one step, which was the ultimate cause of the overthrow of the Norman dynasty. Having experienced the fidelity of his Saracen subjects in various wars, he established a colony of them at Nocera, in Apulia, amounting to 20,000 in number, with a view of imposing a check upon his enemies in that direction. This proceeding was regarded by Rome as an act of daring impiety, and the excellent terms on which the Normans had hitherto stood with the popes, underwent a change from that hour.

In the thirteenth century the papal power was at its zenith. Under the pontificate of the Innocents, the theocratic dream of Hildebrand seemed about to be realized. Kings and counts were to hold their crowns and coronets at the pleasure of the pontiff, to justify to him the use of their inferior authority, and to employ it in support of that power which,

derived from Heaven itself, could acknowledge no superior, equal, or competitor upon earth. Their territories were the patrimony of St. Peter, and the Bishop of Rome must assert his legitimate authority over the kings and rulers of the world.

Such was the language of the Vatican in the thirteenth century. Men heard, trembled, and acquiesced; with one exception — the Race of Rollo — the Protestants of the day. As William the Norman of England,* and Robert the Norman of Italy, scorned the pre-

* While Hildebrand was receiving vows of vassalage from all the European kingdoms, France, Hungary, Poland, Spain, *Russia* (see *Hildebrand's Epist.*), and Germany, what was the Norman's answer when the pope demanded the oath of fealty for England? "Never! I hold my kingdom of God, and of my sword." On another occasion, at the time that Henry of Germany was doing penance barefoot, at Canossa, news was brought to William, at the castle of Harcourt, that two of the pope's legates were in waiting, and desiring a conference. "I will receive," said the duke, "the legates of the pope, the general father of the faithful, if they come to speak to me about the Christian religion; but, if a monk in my dominions dares utter an unseemly word, I will have him hanged ignominiously on the highest oak in the forest."

tensions of Gregory the Seventh, so Frederic the Norman of Sicily despised the arrogant claims of Innocent IV. The same spirit spoke out in Roger Bigod, a Norman baron, who was present at the Council of Lyons when Innocent went through the form of excommunicating the Sicilian king. Allusion having been made to England, as in feudal subjection to Rome, the bold baron stood forth alone in the midst of the assembly, and indignantly exclaimed against the pretension.

And so, whenever and wherever through the middle ages we regard the Normans, we find them uniformly and firmly refusing to permit the exercise of any temporal power within their respective territories. The genius of that race, with all its characteristic reverence, was too steady and clear-sighted to allow any confusion of the plainly distinguishable domains of spiritual and temporal jurisdiction.

Acknowledging the pope as head of the church, and deferring to him in matters of doctrine, they met every assumption of secular power as unwarrantable usurpation on the

part of Christ's vicegerent, being directly opposed to his own Divine declaration that his "kingdom was not of this world." The *Protestants* of the middle ages, they constantly maintained the independence of society with regard to the church, and held out a proud example of resistance, when kings and people were tamely crouching before it.

We have seen the Sicilian counts and kings making head against constant excommunications with success. Frederic's liberality of spirit, and, in particular, the measure to which I have above referred, had rendered him so obnoxious to the papacy, that he conducted almost all his proceedings in the face of excommunication. But he had enough of the Norman blood in him to bear up manfully against this continued ban, and when he entered Jerusalem, did not scruple to dispense with papal intervention. Being at the time under sentence of excommunication, he placed the crown on his head with his own hands.

At this period the secular arm of the Guelph was also in its zenith. With this alone Fre-

deric would have been able to cope, but, united with the papal power, it formed a strength it was not in man to make head against. Frederic himself remained unmoved, but Rome attacked him through others. Her subtle influence began by degrees to prevail. The minds of men were gradually alienated from the king. He found himself denounced as an infidel, shunned as one plague-stricken, and felt the sceptre gliding from his grasp.

Still undaunted, to the last he bore up against it all, and had just collected a fresh army, with the intention of renewing his efforts, when the brave spirit that had struggled so long, like a keen sword wearing out a sheath, at length freed itself from its earthly tenement, and left the sceptre to be struggled for by those who succeeded to the fatal claim. It passed through but one hand more before leaving the Norman line for ever. The scene which opened with that heroic family of Hauteville draws to a close. The curtain falls on Manfred.

Manfred, Prince of Tarento, was the natu-

ral son of Frederic. All his legitimate children had died, and his grandson, Conrad, being an infant, Manfred was appointed regent, and subsequently crowned King of Sicily in 1258.

Manfred had been a great favourite with Frederic. He inherited all his best qualities, and rivalled him in his varied accomplishments. He possessed his warlike genius, his passion for literature, his love of music and the arts. One passion of the time Manfred had unfortunately caught: he was affected with a love of astrology and blind belief in its revelations; and this *penchant*, we shall see, was the ultimate cause of his ruin.

I have already mentioned how the friendly disposition of Rome was changed by Frederic's conduct into hostile feelings, first, by the establishment of the Saracenic colony, and secondly, by his undisguised contempt of the papal interdict. Manfred showed that he inherited his father's sentiments, and Urban IV. resolved to employ every means to accomplish his destruction. First excommunicating the Sicilian king, and declaring him deposed, he

proceeded to offer his kingdom to Henry III. of England. The offer was wisely declined by Henry, but Charles of Anjou was prevailed on to undertake the unrighteous enterprise, and the Crusaders, fresh from the slaughter of the Albigenses, were induced by his Holiness to take part in another scene of blood, and share in the disgrace of the league.

Contemplating this transaction with the calm view of this nineteenth century,—this time of order and comparative good faith, — what a miserable spectacle! The head of the Church, supported by the sworn sons of the cross, leading the brother of a Christian king to the throne of a monarch which could only be rendered vacant by a violation of all law and justice, and the steps to which could only be ascended through the blood of thousands, who by that monarch's virtues had been rendered prosperous and happy.

It was a formidable league, but it had to encounter a general of no ordinary valour and ability. With a powerful and experienced army the issue seemed still uncertain, and the

world looked on in doubt. But there was treachery in Manfred's camp; his time was come. The Count of Caserta, who had been left to guard the important pass of Garigliano, permitted the Germans to pass without striking a blow. They were upon Manfred before he was aware, and he had just time to reach Benevento, when Charles appeared under its walls. Here he was safe, and had he remained on the defensive, it would have afforded time for his Ghibelline allies to come up. But his unhappy belief in astrology was his ruin; the signs reporting that the hour was propitious, he quitted his shelter, and went out to attack Charles.

Long was the battle doubtful, and the advent of a reserve of Saracens was on point of turning the day, when the barons of Apulia drew off their forces and retired from the field. Manfred marked the defection, and saw that all was lost. As he turned his head to look after the traitors, the silver eagle became detached from his helmet, and the crest fell to the ground. To a mind vigilant of

omens there seemed a fatal significance in this. "It is all over," said the king; "my own hands put the crest on firmly this morning: it cannot be an accident."

There now remained but to die, and Manfred met his fate as became the last of the Normans. One look around on the loved land which treachery had lost him. One glance to heaven where hope had fled before him. Then proud as in his brightest hour the king rose in his saddle, and uttering his war cry, drove his charger into the thickest of his enemy. There, wearied with slaughter and pierced with a thousand wounds, he sank upon a heap of slain.

We have to look forward but a few years for his requiem. It will be long before the Sicilian vespers are forgotten. Fit euthanasia for a betrayed and murdered king!

* * * *

"I have had a fine dream," as the expiring Saxe said of his life; but the dazzling images are gone, and the vision "fades into the light of common day." I lean against a field-gate, and look upon a humble village. The

embattled tower from which but now the sons of Tancred issued on their way to thrones, changes to a crumbling barn, and a green landscape paced by a silent stream, replaces the ensanguined field, the tumult, and the shock of war; but as the illusion dissipates, the form of Eremberga, in her novice dress, lingers before me, I catch the morning gleam on the helm of Count Roger, while he places his standard on the walls of Messina, and as I mount my pony and resume my journey, the war-cry of the deserted Manfred thrills upon my ear.

CHAPTER VII.

COUTANCES. — SERVICE IN THE CATHEDRAL. — ILLIBERALITY. — ABBEY OF HAMBIE. — THE PAYNELS. — ASCETICISM. — GRANVILLE.

What awful perspective, while from our sight,
With gradual stealth, the lateral windows hide
Their portraitures; their stonework glimmers, dyed
In the soft chequerings of a sleepy light.
List, O list!

The music bursteth into second life;
The notes luxuriate, every stone is kissed
By sound, or ghost of sound, in mazy strife;
Heart-thrilling strains, that cast before the eye
Of the devout a veil of extasy.

Wordsworth.

Doomed as we are, our native dust
To wet with many a bitter shower;
It ill befits us to disdain
The altar, to deride the fane,
Where simple sufferers bend in trust
To win a happier hour.

Where'er we roam—along the brink
Of Rhine, or by the sweeping Po;
Through Alpine vale, or champaign wide,
Whate'er we look on, at our side
Be Charity—to bid us think,
And feel—if we would know.

Wordsworth.

Oh, for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless contiguity of shade;
Where rumours of oppression and deceit
Might never reach me more!

Cowper.

It was the feast of St. Michael, and the pious town of Coutances was celebrating that especial Norman festival* with its usual pomp. The bishop of the diocese was to attend high mass in the cathedral, and long before the hour of worship had arrived the nave and aisles were filled with people.

Overhead, and around the assembled crowds, rose the finest church of the Pointed style in

* St. Michael—the "Saint of high places"—was the favourite saint of the Normans. Mont St. Michael, which lies before us, was sanctified by its dedication to him, as also Mount Gargano, in the *Capitanata*. Both these places were famous points of pilgrimage.

Normandy. For a long time it offered a difficulty to the date usually assigned for the earliest instances of that style, the Society of Antiquaries in France maintaining that their cathedral was begun and completed in the eleventh century. Mr. Gally Knight's researches, however, have placed the matter beyond doubt, clearly showing that its date is posterior to 1189. A church had been erected on the site by means of funds furnished by Tancred de Hauteville and his sons, in 1056, but Mr. Knight forced the Antiquaries to admit that this temple had long ago disappeared, and was not replaced by the present edifice until subsequently to the period I have mentioned. Belonging to the earliest era of the ogive, its design is as simple as could consist with the presence of the essential characteristics of that style. Its character is less of beauty than of grace; unlike St. Ouen, of which the reverse may be said. The symmetry must be pronounced faultless. Nothing could add to the charm of the two western towers, which are precisely similar in size and plan; but the

aspect of the central tower is indescribable. It is of that kind, as not often happens in the inanimate creation—except with setting suns, or the motionless sea—to fill one's eyes with tears, we know not why. One could never tire of gazing upon its exquisite lines, when we remember the poor earthly materials of stone and mortar, and we marvel at

"The innate flash that such a *tower* could mould."

Such are the heavenly results permitted to the genius of man, when stimulated by faith and love!

The interior is still lighter and more etherial than that of St. Ouen. This extreme airiness of appearance is produced by the absence of the walls commonly intervening between the aisle and apsidal chapels. This has the further effect of enhancing the rich and ample character of the church's area, by throwing an additional aisle, as it were, round the whole building.

I know nothing more calculated to strike the imagination and impress the heart, than a con-

gregation assembled for divine worship in one of the grand cathedrals of the middle ages.

The functionaries of the church, as well as the ritual forms in its service, prevailing during those times, are still upheld on the continent, though with lessened numbers, and diminished splendour from the time when dissenters were not, and, professedly at least, the unbelievers were few. It was a fine sight to-day—one by one come the venerable canons, and occupy the stalls; then the officiating priests enter the sanctuary; next comes the bishop, attired in his episcopal garments—not with the tasselled cap of a Don, lawn sleeves, and sable gown, but in a robe glittering and stiff with gold—an actual mitre on his head, an actual crook in his hand. Having made the circuit of the church, preceded by the host, the verger, and boys bearing incense, the bishop takes his seat on the throne, a priest advances, and receives the pastoral staff from his hands, which he reverently kisses, and then the service commences.

Meantime the government staff have arrived

and taken their places below the canons, and the nave is filled with women, presenting the various dresses of the Bocage; the prevailing *coiffure* reigns conspicuously throughout the perspective—a sea of muslin and lace. The men are placed principally in the space between the sanctuary and the apsidal chapels, where the women are not permitted to enter.

As the solemn tones of the deep brass instruments accompanying the voice of the priest swelled upward to the roof, a profound stillness fell on the assembled crowds. Every individual knelt, piously bending the head. Attentive and reverent ears listened to the service. Could the lowest conceivable churchman, the most inveterate bigot imaginable, regard such a scene without respect? Could the most careless witness it and fail to be impressed?—Just then some noisy steps invaded the solemnity; two strangers advanced up the aisle. Entering the space behind the choir and ascending the side steps of the sanctuary, they took up a conspicuous position exactly opposite the bishop. They then began to comment upon the scene and the cere-

mony before them, in tones so loud, as considerably to disturb the worshippers, while it was too evident from their gestures that they regarded the whole with any feelings but those of respect. The position they occupied, and their loud remarks, attracted a momentary attention, but the priests and congregation soon returned to their devotions with dignified indifference.

The verger indeed paused a moment as he passed them on the steps of the sanctuary. The desecration seemed to arouse him to a recollection of the variety of weapons with which he was furnished,* but after an instant he disdainfully went on. Presently their curiosity being satisfied, and their criticism apparently exhausted, they again stamped down the aisle and departed.

I grieve to say these visitants belonged to a nation priding itself on its liberality of sentiment and cherishing as its life-blood the treasure of Religious Liberty—a Protestant

* The verger, called "Le Suisse," is armed rather anomalously, considering his duties, *cap-à-pie*, a pole-axe, a long sword, &c.

nation—that is, a nation protesting against coercion of conscience,* and repudiating disdain of another's religious belief, if founded on honest conviction. I grieve to say the English too often leave their liberality with their country behind.

Regretfully too must I avow them to have been professors of that science, so vaunted as enlarging and unprejudicing the mind, "employing in its theory the noblest faculties of the soul, and exerting in its practice the cardinal virtues of the heart!"—"Reason and the perfection of Reason!"

It was impossible to doubt it,—Who could mistake the man of law? who misconstrue the peculiar air of dogmatism and self-sufficiency, generated in the atmosphere, nursed by the practice of that profession? and in their most seedy costume, who could fail to recognize the characteristic dinginess of a gentleman from the inns of court? The next day being obliged to travel some little distance in the diligence, for-

* The original and true meaning of the term *Protestant*.

tune gave me these two individuals as my fellow travellers, who treated me to a comment on the proceedings of the day before, at the Cathedral, dwelling with lively bitterness upon the horrors of Antichrist, the Babylonian Lady, and so forth. The first hotel we reached was the scene of a tremendous row, got up entirely by their assumption and intolerance. In five minutes, they had *aggravated* the household to a pitch of fury. I, being of their country and party, was naturally involved, and I therefore sought some means of escaping from their company. Luckily another carriage just then passed by, which I seized upon, and went the rest of my way alone; so I left them, and, as *Christian* said of the devils, "I saw them no more."

* * * *

Following the plan I had laid down, my course now lay to the eastward in the direction of Avranches. To reach that town the traveller must pass through Granville. The monotony of the road between the latter place and Coutances may be pleasantly avoided in making a

détour by Mesnil-Aubert and St. Denis le Gast,* to visit the sequestered abbey of Hambie. The remote and secluded spot in which the abbey lies was formerly guarded by a castle, whose ruins appear on an eminence commanding the path. This castle was built by Baron Paynel in the time of Henry I. The Paynels, *Anglicè* Pagnels, were among the many families who contributed to the forces of William, and were divided for several centuries after the conquest between Normandy and England.

The name of William Paynel is mentioned by Wace as one of the barons who fought with the Conqueror at Hastings. He was father to Raoul Paynel, sheriff of Yorkshire. The Paynels are mentioned as large proprietors several times in *Domesday*, from which it appears that the principal estates of the English branch of the family lay in Buckinghamshire. The name has been preserved as an addition to the town of Newport in that county.

The Paynels were among the most distin-

* At St. Denis le Gast was born St. Evremond, on the 1st of April, 1613.

guished chivalry of the day, and flourished as the heroes of many a romantic story. Among the rest is a marvellous tradition connected with the Mount Hambie in the island of Jersey. It is related that this beautiful spot was the home of a dragon, who had devoured half the inhabitants of the island, and was so terrible that no one had yet been found daring enough to attack him. It came to the ears of one of the gallant Paynels, who passed over to the island; and, after a long and furious contest, succeeded in slaying the dragon. The gallant knight, however, is said to have survived the exploit but a short time, being poisoned by the monster's mephitic breath.

Passing the castle of the Paynels, we come to the lovely abbey of Hambie. The peaceful aspect of this House of Religion strikes us the more forcibly from its contrast with the neighbouring House of War. You might traverse the globe, and fail to find, for the pious or the world-weary, a retreat so fit as this.

It lies in the niche of a retired, mysterious-

looking valley, flanked on one side by the little river Syenne, and shut in on the other by rocks broken into the most picturesque forms, grey patches peering out here and there from beneath their vesture of moss and lichen. Behind, the mountain rises into air, and forbids the intrusions of the world.

There is something strangely seductive in the seclusion of such a spot. Beguiled for a moment by its untried tranquillity, the heart whispers self-deceivingly, "There is peace for man, and it is here." Inhaling the calm of the atmosphere, we shrink from the thought of again returning to the vain agitations of life, and turn with utter disgust from the ambitions, the strivings, the friendships, the loves, of the tumultuous world. We long to be for ever set free from the travail of ordinary existence —to pass away from men within the gate of the cloister—to say to the weary soul, "Be thou at rest!"

We marvel not at the number of the sad children of Adam who, in the Middle Ages, yielded to this so natural yearning for repose:

in such a spot, in the mood it induces, we can too easily understand it. But let us not forget the result. Did not he who fled to monastic seclusion meet foes far deadlier than they who still continued battling with their destiny on the paths of the world? Had he not to encounter those unpitying demons who assail the solitary, and did he not find the banished sympathies of his heart replaced by the direst enemy of all—himself? The records of the many who failed to find the peace they sought remain a lesson to posterity, that activity and labour are the proper destiny of man.

It is not so easy to sympathise with those who turned to monastic shelter for the discipline of mortification. The man who sought to flog and starve himself into pity, knew but little of his own nature; still less did he comprehend the spirit of that religion of which he conceived such practices to be a meritorious profession.

In the Middle Ages the Bible was a sealed-up book. Had access been given to the truth, men would have discovered that Christianity has nothing akin to asceticism. The morality

she prescribes is social; the exercises she commands are social; the discipline she enjoins is to be practised in the every-day walks of life; *with* our fellow-men—*for* our fellow-men.

Look to the life of its Founder. Such was his morality—such his exercises—such his discipline. From his baptism in Jordan till his death he walked on the broad paths of the world, in the high-ways, in the market-places—moving, sojourning, sympathising with those whose form of clay he wore.

Nor in his earlier days did he keep himself apart from men. That his life was passed among his family, that he shared their ordinary occupations, is manifest from the question to which his first miracles gave rise. "Is not this the carpenter's son?"

* * * *

* * * *

There is nothing in the architecture of the abbey of Hambie to delay the stranger. In its position consists its charm—a charm delicious, yet full of sorrow. We feel, as we turn away, that the tranquillity breathed from

its aspect mocks the misery of man, for whom there is no repose on this side the bourne, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

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Resuming the route to Avranches, we next come to Granville. Its dismal position and lugubrious granite houses are in keeping with the sad memories that invest the spot where the Vendean army struck their last blow in the cause of loyalty and order.

The fatal day of Chollet had brought a check to the brilliant career of the Vendeans. After a long and bloody contest with the entire force of the Republic, and the loss of their chiefs, Lescure, Bonchamp, and D'Elbée, the loyalist army gave way. For a little time after the fall of his brother leaders the brave Rochejacquelin still held his ground, and though the forces of the Republicans, swelled with veteran troops, and directed by the genius of Kleber, put forth all their energies, the issue was most uncertain,

when suddenly an unaccountable panic arose among the Vendeans: "To the Loire! to the Loire!" resounded through the field, and a few minutes changed the array of battle into a mass of the most hopeless disorder.

Vainly did Rochejacquelin implore them to remain, and die where they were; his frantic entreaties were drowned in the universal cry, "To the Loire! to the Loire!" Several times he succeeded in extricating his charger for a moment from the mass, and waving his bloody sabre over his head, strove to rush back; but each time he was borne away in the tide of fugitives, rushing towards the river which severed their ill-starred land from Brittany. They were stopped by the darkness at Beaupreau. Here Rochejacquelin was chosen their leader. His enthusiasm revived their drooping spirits; he rallied them once again, and led them to that victory, which, in the opinion of the best critics in the art of war, has placed his name in the foremost rank of military leaders—the victory of Laval.

After this success the army of the Vendeans

marched northward towards Granville, encouraged by the promise of succour from the British minister, who had suggested that point as a spot where reinforcements could be landed with facility. Accordingly, they made their way hither, leaving the women and children at Avranches, with a few troops to keep open a retreat. Granville is a place of so great natural strength, that it is called the Gibraltar of Normandy, and it was at this time strongly garrisoned by the Republicans; but, the Vendeans, knowing that their fire could be heard by the English troops at Jersey, and confident of speedy support, attacked it without hesitation.

For six-and-thirty hours the attack was vigorously maintained, and the Vendeans made considerable impression; but, though their forlorn condition was well known, and every shot was heard at Jersey, no relief came. Their ammunition now failing, they gave themselves up to despair; no entreaties nor exhortations could prevail upon them to prolong the struggle. Breaking up into parties, they left the sea-

coast as best they could, cursing Pitt, Dundas, and the whole English nation.

"Home!" was now the cry; "back to the Bocage!" Their bosoms swelled at the sound. All along that woody track before us to Avranches was strewed with the shattered wreck of the Vendean army, as they rushed tumultuously towards their homes. At Avranches they were joined by their companions, and still hastened towards the south.

The fate of the Loyalists is well known. Many of them fell in the next encounter with the Republicans, and the remnant, still pressing onward under Rochejacquelin, reached the Loire. Here they found it impossible to effect a passage, and wandered miserably up and down the inexorable river, Westerman and his butcher troops behind, strewing the shore with corpses. Stupified with their condition, and helpless as infants, the Royalists fell an easy prey. A very few escaped into La Vendée, and most of these were afterwards rooted out of their concealments in twos and threes, to perish by the hand of the executioner. The heroic

Rochejacquelin was the last who survived, and he fell a victim to the treachery of a Republican grenadier, whose life he was endeavouring to save. He was just twenty-one years old.

CHAPTER VIII.

AVRANCHES.—ITS CATHEDRAL.—COLONIZATION OF CHESHIRE.—ESPECIAL NORMAN CHARACTER OF CHESHIRE.—COURAGE.—GENEALOGIES.—HORSEMANSHIP.—A TERRITORIAL NAME.

Out upon Time! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things before!
Out upon Time! who forever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to grieve
O'er that which has been, and o'er that which must be;
What we have seen our sons shall see;
Remnants of things that have passed away,
Fragments of stone reared by creatures of clay! BYRON.

The king gave to him for his inheritance
The county of Chester, with its appurtenance,
By victory to win the aforesaid earldome,
Freely to govern it as by conquest right,
Made a sure charter to him and his succession
By the sword of dignity to hold it with might.
And to call a parliament at his will and sight,
To order his subjects after true justice
As a perpotent prince, and statutes to devise. GOWER.

FROM Granville to Avranches you pass

through a country of the most luxurious beauty. Deep though not sombre woods stretch away on all sides, their continuity pleasantly broken here and there by patches of the richest cultivation. As you leave Granville and advance deeper into the Avranchin, the women's coiffures begin to rise until near Avranches, where they soar to a portentous altitude; reminding one somewhat of the gradual elongation of the London footmen, as you pass westward from Russell Square, culminating at last in the powdered Anakim who lounge in the halls of May Fair, or loom over Belgravian carriages. The Avranchin ladies spend so much attention and money upon their heads, that they have none left of either for the lower parts of their persons, and the contrast between the meanness of the one and the pomp of the other is often ludicrous in the extreme. Every minute you meet peasant girls, round whose heads float clouds of fine lace resting on the sides and summits of snowy muslin mountains, while their limbs move under a gown of the very coarsest material, and

their dear little feet are absolutely bare. The cherished head is rioting aloft in the pride of muslin and vanity of lace, while the neglected feet are left to shift for themselves, and form an intimate acquaintance with the vulgar high road, and any truant stone they may come across.

Over all this tract, now the garden of Normandy, spread some fifty years ago the broken forces of the Vendeans, starving, half-clothed, bleeding, and diminishing every moment by twos and threes as the butchers of the republic gained on them. But the sighs and groans of the suffering loyalists are forgotten. Far different sounds awake the echoes now. They thrill only to the delicious music of nightingales, innumerable as on the banks of Jordan; and, as if to compensate for the havoc spread here once by the hand of man, nature has been doubly lavish of her favours, and spread her richest, greenest mantle over the scene.

At the south-eastern extremity of the territory of the Avranchin, rises its capital, Avran-

ches. The town is situated on a hill, up the sides and brow of which the houses ascend rather irregularly. On the top stands the residence of the sub-prefect of the department; the view from this point is very beautiful. Before you is the bay of Cancale, in the midst of which rises up the granite cone of the Mount St. Michael. To the right, far as the eye can reach, fine rich forests clothe the country to the horizon; the wild romantic coast of Brittany runs off to the left, while beneath you is the picturesque town itself.

There are people living still who can tell of the magnificent cathedral which stood on this spot at the end of the last century, an object of solemn beauty from all the country round. Close by were the conventual buildings, and both they and the cathedral were encircled by the rich woods of the archbishop's grounds, pierced here and there with grave vistaed walks. These last have been done up in the most approved modern style as a promenade for the townspeople, and adorned with

a bust of one of the revolutionary heroes. The revolutionists left just enough of the conventual buildings to form a basis for the present barracks. The cathedral itself underwent entire and absolute demolition. Its very site can now only be determined by a large oblong stone which was formerly placed at the front of the western portal, and by an oversight escaped the general destruction. On this stone knelt Henry II. in the year 1172, while the pope's legate absolved him from the alleged murder of Thomas à Beckett. The stone is enclosed by chains, which at once secure it from profane footsteps, and attract the attention of the stranger. It is close in front of the sub-prefect's house—one of those unspeakable French mansions which in warm weather, with their closed white jalousies, sillless windows, and unbroken surface of blank wall glare at you, a great white cube, in the sun,—fit representation of the substituted order of things, it occupies the site of the vanished Norman cathedral.*

* It will hardly be believed that this magnificent build-

At the period of the conquest of England Avranches and the surrounding territory belonged to a Norman baron named Hugh, who had acquired the surname of Lupus, on account of the frequent and extravagant feasts he gave, and the freedom with which he indulged on these occasions. He was one of the richest, bravest, and most powerful barons at the rendezvous of Lillebonne. His sisters had formed alliances with several of the principal seigneurs in Normandy, and he held a high place in the estimation of the Conqueror, whose half-sister his father had espoused. Hugh Lupus and his relatives did good service at Hastings, and the fairest shire in bonnie England was the reward of his valour. William, sensible how much the security of the empire towards the west depended on the stability of the district bordering the inimical territory of Wales, and to en-

ing was purchased, by a shoemaker, for three thousand francs, that is, one hundred and twenty-eight pounds! He sold the materials by retail, and thus amassed a considerable sum; the wood, stone, and mortar, in the estimation of the revolutionists, recovering their natural value when no longer wearing the form of the house of God.

courage and enable his nephew to whom that important trust was confided to discharge it efficiently, erected the county of Cheshire into a palatinate.* The charter of creation expressed that Hugh Lupus was "to hold it by the sword as freely as William held his kingdom of England."† Regal privileges were conferred upon him, such as the right of pardoning treasons, murders, and felonies, appointing the judges and justices of the peace, &c.—so large an authority being given "in order that the earl might be more watchful in its defence, and that the inhabitants having justice administered at home, might not be obliged to go out of the country, and leave it open to the incursions of the enemy."

Although the great bulk of the invading

* For the same reason Durham, as bordering on the hostile country of Scotland, was created a palatinate.

† A "sword of dignity" was presented to Hugh, at the time the charter was sealed, and all writs in the palatinate ran, not *contra coronam regis*, but *contra dignitatem gladii Cestriæ*. This charter and sword are still extant. The sword is preserved in the British Museum. The hilt, which is decorated with pearls, bears the inscription *Hugo Comes Cestriæ*.

army led by William the Conqueror was strictly Norman, yet it is well known that several of the French provinces contributed contingents. Accordingly on the allotment of lands after the conquest of the country, some of them became the property of warriors who had not before been subjects of the duke, that is, not Normans. It followed, that in most of the counties, there was more or less an infusion of blood which could be traced neither to the Saxon nor the Norman races.

Cheshire, less than any other, if at all, exhibited this intermixture. Hugh was accompanied to the palatinate by his numerous relatives and neighbours from the Avranchin; among them the entire county, divided into fiefs, was distributed: so that a short time after the conquest Cheshire may be said to have been exclusively peopled by the Teutonic race—the invaded Saxons, and the Norman invaders; the latter, as was natural, forming the superior, the former the inferior classes.

This view of the peculiar colonization of Cheshire, receives abundant confirmation from

the writings of the ancient historians, most of whom, in delineating the character of the natives of that county, describe it as exhibiting in a remarkable degree, the qualities most distinctive of the Teuton races—the Normans in particular. The innate refinement of that people, their loyalty, courage, and hospitality, their love of genealogies, their skill in horsemanship—these all devolved largely upon Cheshire, and no where is the vitality of the Norman spirit more strikingly displayed than in that county. These characteristics are as vigorous to-day as they were eight hundred years ago. To paint the men of the nineteenth century, we might almost use the language of the eleventh.

Old Speed, in his quaint phraseology calls Cheshire "the seedplot of gentility;" Camden says that county "always sent forth more gentry than any other part of the kingdom." Selden writes to the same effect, and Fuller in his "Worthies," tells us that the Cheshire gentry were ever remarkable for four things—their numbers, their antiquity, their hospitality, and

(that essential attribute of the gentleman) their loyalty; and in reference to their hospitality, some of which he "wishes were planted in the south," he mentions that forty of the Cheshire gentry bore wheat-sheaves in their coats of arms, that device in heraldry denoting a person given to hospitality.*

It is scarcely necessary to mention the frequent testimony borne by history to the bravery of the Cheshire gentlemen and yeomen. The old names of the county, Calveley, Dutton, Knowles, Egerton, Foulshurst, Warburton, Hawkestone are blended with the most glorious recollections of English prowess. With Crecy, with Poictiers,† with Agincourt. In after years too, when the Gael felt the force

* See also Kent's "Grammar of Heraldry," under the name *Raincourt*.

† Dutton of Dutton, Foulshurst of Crewe, Delves of Doddington, Hawkestone of Wrinehill—to these four, with Lord Audley, the author of *The Complete History of England*, vol. i. p. 226, ascribes principally the victory of Poictiers. Lord Audley "vowed to be first of the battle," the others followed him, and performed prodigies of valour," for which they were afterwards distinguished by The Prince. The five individuals I have mentioned were Cheshire men.

of the Norman arms, Cheshire was not behind. When Lord Hertford took Edinburgh, in the sixteenth century, he conceived himself so much beholden for his victory to the Cheshire troops, that he exercised his delegated prerogative in knighting eighteen gentlemen of the county on the spot, and to seven more gave the *S. S.* collar, and the silver spurs.

So much for the gentlemen—in testimony to the valour of the Cheshire yeomen let us quote the words of Drayton:—

"In many a bloody field since conquering William came,
Her people she hath proved, to her eternal fame,
All children of her own, the leader and the led,
The mightiest men of bone in her full bosom bred.
Their yeomanry they still endeavour to uphold
For rightly, whilst herself, brave England was of old;
And our courageous kings us forth to conquest led—
Our armies (in those times ne'er through the world so dread)
Of her tall yeomen were, and footmen for the most;
Who with their bills and bows may confidently boast
Our leopards* they so long and bravely did advance
Above the fleur-de-lys even in the heart of France."

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* In royal blazonry *leopards* and *lions* were synonymous terms, and used indifferently.—SELDEN.

I have adverted to two other points in which the inhabitants of this county have always exhibited their especial Norman origin, viz., their love of genealogies and skill in horsemanship.

A desire of preserving an authentic history of his descent characterised the Norwegian noble from the very earliest times. We are told that those songs with which the northern bards regaled the heroes at their "feasts of shells," were but versified chronicles of each ancestral line, symphonied by their stirring deeds. Through the oak-fire's uncertain flame, the chieftain saw descend the shadowy forms of his fathers,—they came from the halls of Odin as the harper swept the strings, and deployed before their descendant, "rejoicing in the sound of their praise." No parchment told his lineage to the warrior of those days, but the heroic names were branded each night upon his swelling heart, by the burning numbers of the bard.

Thus did the Northman chronicle his ancestry in those unlettered times. Afterwards when the oak-fire was extinguished, the shell thrown by, and the "night came" no more "with songs"—

when we reach the age of records, we find this love of lineage availing itself of the new method of commemoration. This strong ancestral spirit of the Norman may be traced partly to the profound sentiment of Perpetuity which formed the principal and noblest element of his character, and partly to the nature of the property to which he was linked by the immemorial customs of the Teuton race.

The feudal system prevailed from the first among the Teutons. Now the feud was not like any other property; it had constant need of a possessor to defend it, to do its services, fulfil the obligations inherent in the tenement, and maintain its position in the general association of the lords of the soil. Hence the feud was identified in a kind of way with its possessor. The same identification had subsisted with the preceding proprietors, and would subsist with those who were to follow; thus by this connexion with one enduring object, the fleeting generations were connected together, and seemed also to endure.

The means too by which the feud was origi-

nally acquired served to give an interest and value to the Teuton genealogy which we shall vainly seek in that of other nations, save the Hebrews, among whom genealogies connected with those stupendous promises on which the hope of the world hung, were naturally kept with a trembling and awful regard. Among the cultivated classes of the Greeks and Romans, whose faith had sunk under an accumulation of conflicting creeds, or succumbed before a monstrous mythology: with them the future world lived only in the fictions of the poets; and how could they care to perpetuate the names of an ancestry whom throughout eternity they were to meet no more?

The Feud could only be acquired in the first instance by personal merit; the manner of the grant was by words of gratuitous and pure donation, implying no return on the part of him who held it, but a continuation of the valour, worth, and loyalty to which he owed the gift at first.

The possession of land being thus necessarily associated with superior worth, we can under-

stand the affectionate regard with which the Teuton warrior was accustomed to gather up each link of the ancestral chain, riveted as they were to the same soil which, while it reminded the son of his duty, recalled the merits of the father, and would endure an abiding incentive to future generations to emulate the virtues of the past.

This inveterate regard to ancestry, inherent as I have said, in the Norman race, and fed by the territorial system I have described, would receive, naturally, a development coincident with the system by which it was nourished; and as the Norman, arrested in his progress by the ocean, was the first of the Teuton race to lay aside his nomade character and settle into forms of society, still bearing the national stamp, we are prepared to find this ancestral spirit more strongly manifested in him than in any of the other branches of the great northern tree.

When we view the Normans at their first settlement in France, the feudal system appears among them in a state of complete maturity. Just about the time of the Norman conquest of

England, *surnames* began to be adopted, and with those whose merits entitled them to the possession of lands, they were generally taken from the soil, the title of the feud being written over (*sur*) the *name* thus,

Dutton
de
Hugh.

This practice had a wider and far more important effect than that of securing mere family distinctions. Formerly the merits, of which the feud was the representative, was associated only with the ancestors who had acquired, or the descendant who actually held it; but now this mode of taking title from the soil placed the possessor of an ancient territorial name in some sort beyond the reach of fortune. The soil might now by caprice, by law, by any of the thousand vicissitudes of human affairs be transferred to other hands—be owned by stranger blood, but now too, there was something of which accident could not deprive him—the territorial name remained; linked indissolubly and for ever, with all the ancient ennobling associations, — the valour that none could hope to

shake, the honour that none might dare to stain, the loyalty that would not be questioned.

Victor Hugo says, the angels talk of us by our Christian names; let us rather think that by his Surname those benevolent spirits love to designate Man; for thus, when they are compelled to note the stains upon some honoured name, they cannot record the errors of the son, without recalling the virtues of the father.

Few indeed are the feudal names that have survived the ordeal of the eight centuries since the conquest, the destroying crusades, the exterminating war of the roses, the jealous axe of the Plantagenet and the Tudor—but those few are the natural nobility of the land; and heralds will tell you that the noblest families now are those who have a right to territorial names.*

These are titles that no minister can degrade into a political engine. Some Pitt may arise to-morrow and carry measures through a reluctant chamber on the shoulders of a hundred new-made titularies—scorn-

* For instance, Ratcliffe of Ratcliffe; Dutton of Dutton: Wolseley of Wolseley, &c.

ing while he creates them. He could not add one to the true nobles deriving their name from the far times when valour and worth were the only avenues to honour.

This ancestral spirit glowing at the time of the Norman conquest with the ardour of a passion was of course largely imported into Cheshire, with its almost exclusive Norman colonization; and there is no county in which the records of the respective families have been preserved with so much care.

Their skill in horsemanship seems to be another hereditary Norman quality. The horse formed a most important part of the property of the early Teuton, as we might imagine in a people addicted to war and the chace. The stealing of a horse was visited with the heaviest penalties; and when a man was unable to ride he was thought no longer fit to live. Their love of horses was even manifested in their names. Horsa and Hengist both signify a horse, and all the names ending in *mar* and *mer*, such as Waldemar, Hincmar, &c., have a similar import. The national predilection was also

manifested in their custom of signalizing the scene of a great victory by carving a horse out of an adjoining mountain, as the chalk horse near Edginton, which commemorates the scene of Alfred's victory over the Danes.

The Normans in particular, were especially fond of horses. Cavalry always preponderated very much in their armies, and contributed greatly to their successes. At the battle of Hastings, while Harold's Saxon forces were nearly all infantry, the Normans were composed almost entirely of horse, a circumstance to which many have mainly attributed the entire success of that day. To the Norman skill in horsemanship history testifies the Cestrian knights in olden time succeeded, and if the reader has ever had the good fortune to follow Joe Maiden and the "Cheshire," I think he will bear witness that the gentlemen of that county have not yet forgotten how to ride.

CHAPTER IX.

MOUNT ST. MICHAEL. — EVIL SPIRITS. — HISTORY OF THE MOUNT.—ROYAL DEMOLITION OF A ROYAL CAGE. — DISENCHANTMENT.

It was a vast and venerable pile,
So old it seemed only not to fall,
Yet strength was pillared in each massy aisle.
Monastic dome ! condemned to uses vile !

Childe Harold.

Like the flower of Syrian sands,
That crumbled in the closing hands.

Anon.

A DRIVE of five leagues from Avranches brings you to the edge of the vast plain of alternate sand and water, from the midst of which rises the Mount St. Michael.

Looking from the hill at Avranches, the mount seems close under you, though actually several miles off, and the real distance is much

enhanced by the hilly and difficult nature of the country through which you must pass to reach it, involving, as I have said, a *trajet* of full five leagues.

From its isolated position and strange, uncertain outline, the mount derives quite a weird supernatural appearance; moreover, the eye's first measure of its distance was so deceitful, that it seems to shift and retire as you descend from the high levels of the surrounding country. As you advance, it appears to recede like those magic castles in old romances, that always defying, yet always eluding the knights-errant, sometimes led them such a weary life. You cannot help thinking that if there be an enchanter in the nineteenth century, this must be his den. So deceitful is its aspect, so mysterious its air, that you are agreeably surprised to find it does not vanish away altogether, but even suffers you to approach it without any extraordinary manifestations.

Three different tracks lead to the mount from the margin of the plain. It is said that

the intermediate spaces are composed, in many spots, of unfathomable quicksands, and that any deviation from the beaten way might plunge the traveller deeper than those who "sleep 'neath Elsinore." These dangerous approaches are in such good keeping with the magical character of the place that I regret to throw a doubt upon their reality, but truth compels me to express my opinion that these perils have been built upon the credulity of the traveller, by the imagination of the guides. As I approached I saw scattered at intervals over the sands, stationed so as to command the avenues leading to the Mount, several dark forms that might well have seemed outposted evil spirits, placed there by the magician to sentinel his home. The moment my cabriolet appeared on the track leading thither, these demons made a simultaneous charge at me, and, howling in a most unearthly way, came bounding and careering over the unfathomable quicksands with the most perfect impunity. No wonder, you will say,—nay, but they turned out not to be spirits after all, they

had only, like Shelley's lover at the lady's window, "a spirit in their feet."*

My coachman seemed quite prepared for the attack, and immediately put his horse into a gallop. The unfortunate animal did his best, but Tam O'Shanter's "noble Maggie" would not have had a chance. A little stream ran at the bottom of the mount, and remembering to what Tam owed his deliverance from the bogies, I looked to its ripple with a kind of hope. But before we could reach the stream they were upon us, no devils at all, but worse — the foulest, most hideous shameless women I ever beheld: one flung herself upon the shafts, another grasped the bridle, a third clung to one of the wheels, and a fourth jumped fairly into my poor little cabriolet. They then burst into a demoniacal

* "I rise from dreams of thee,
In the first sweet sleep of night,
When the winds are breathing low,
And the stars are shining bright.
I rise from dreams of thee,
And *a spirit in my feet*
Hath led me—who knows how?
To thy chamber window, sweet."

scream, the purport of which was that one of them must guide me through the mount.

Not knowing of any spell by which to exorcise these worse than devils, I gave myself up; but not so the driver—he knew how to manage them. By means of the triple stimulant of a kick, a lash, and a shout, simultaneously administered, he induced his horse to make a gigantic effort; one bound carried us through the water, leaving the aspirant guides sprawling on the sand, a second placed us within the portal of the fortification.

Here we were met by a hideous antiquity, an old woman whom it appeared my driver always patronized as a guide. To her I resigned myself, and was led off in triumph, amidst the most dreadful vituperations, howled out by the rejected candidates, who had now recovered themselves, and caught a glimpse of my capture through the portal.

The Mount consists of a huge granite rock of an irregular conical form, about the height of the great pyramid. Its base is encircled by a continuous rampart of extraordinary

strength. Above the ramparts a wretched village, containing three hundred inhabitants, has grown up, the houses of which placed one above the other, like a Chinese attempt at perspective, and hooking on to projections of rock and occasional ruins of an ancient fortress, cling to the side of the Mount in an indescribable manner. Above the village stands the present fortress in very tolerable preservation, and the whole is surmounted by a venerable cathedral surrounded by conventual buildings.

You wonder how all these establishments, of such opposite natures, can have been brought together in this out-of-the-way place. The history is this:—

In times of remote antiquity, the Mount St. Michael stood in the midst of a vast forest, part of the Bocage; at that period it was consecrated to the god Belenus, a Celtic idol. His shrine was here, and his worship was conducted by pagan priests who resided on the Mount. In process of time the forest fell beneath the incursions of the sea, and was

replaced by a great extent of sandy plain, from the centre of which arose in lonely grandeur this Mount and a second smaller one, at a little distance. When Christianity visited these benighted lands, St. Michael (who is called in ecclesiastical history the saint of high places) made it his first business to dislodge the false god from his lofty position. Having put a speedy end to Belenus, he buried him close by under the smaller mount, which still remains in testimony of this achievement, and is called in consequence Tomba Beleni or Tombelaine.*

The next archangelic feat was to destroy a fiery dragon who resided in the forest below and spread destruction over the neighbourhood. The struggle took place on the summit of the Mount. It does not clearly appear why the dragon quitted his strong position, and came

* Some accounts give a different etymology to *Tombelaine*. They say the people had been accustomed to call these two mounds rising from the sand, the Two Tombs; and to distinguish them, the larger was called Mons Tumba, the smaller Mons Tumbella, or Tumbellana; hence Tombelaine.

up to the saint's especial sphere, but certain it is that St. Michael vanquished and slew him on the very spot where the cathedral now stands. It was built by St. Aubert, bishop of Avranches, to commemorate the above exploit, and was dedicated to the valorous archangel.

The erection of the cathedral was speedily followed by the establishment of a body of monks, for whom conventual buildings were provided, and, in order to guard them in this exposed position, and also to make so important a post available for the defence of the kingdom, a fortress was erected round the church and the conventual establishment, the base of the Mount being fortified by strong ramparts. The tide brings the sea twice a-day entirely round the Mount, twice a-day it is surrounded by a plain of dry sand. Its position, thus at once insular and continental, must have given it immense advantages, and indeed rendered it absolutely impregnable in times before the invention of gunpowder, but now a few mortars placed on the main land,

which is about a quarter of a mile distant, would, during the time of tide, reduce it to a heap of ruins, leaving no shelter for its defenders, perhaps not a soul for its defence, when the retreating waters again left the way open.

From time to time, peasants migrated to the Mount from the neighbouring country, and were permitted to build some few cottages on the small space between the ramparts and the fortress. The monks having obtained the relics of St. Aubert, and deposited them in the church, the place acquired a high reputation for sanctity. Many a royal pilgrim came here, age after age, to prostrate himself before the shrine. Louis XI. visited the spot twice. His reverence for it induced him to found a new order of knights, deriving their title from the place. They were called the Chevaliers of St. Michael.

Its strength as a fortress was often put to the test. Henry I. held out here for some time against his brothers, and when most of the other fortresses were thrown open to the conqueror of Agincourt, Mount St. Michael

remained firm, resisting successfully two long and severe sieges in 1417 and 1423, under the command of the gallant d'Estouteville.

Such is the history of these heterogeneous masses of stone and mortar from which Mount St. Michael derives so strange a physiognomy, and which at a distance, together with the isolated position of the place, invest it with so much mystery and attraction; but oh! when you reach it! I have often been disenchanted,—often, but seldom have the visions of my imagination been so entirely and miserably dashed by the reality.

You enter the fortifications by a series of three strong portals; over the second frown two large pieces of artillery left behind him (*à ce qu'on dit!*) by Henry V., with the stone bullets still in their mouths; beside these the arms of the Chevaliers of St. Michael are carved in the wall. The third portal is in excellent preservation, and is defended by a portcullis none the worse for its years and services. This was all very well, but I had been instructed to expect, on emerging from

the last gateway, that I should enter an odoriferous street, perfumed with the fragrance of the almond, the fig-tree, and the olive; romantic cottages on either side, shaded by the rich foliage; instead of this, I found myself in the most miserable hamlet I positively ever saw.

The cottages were dismal tumble-downs of unspeakable shapes and sizes, surrounded by heaps of filth, from which arose ineffable smells. The inhabitants of these loathsome dens were squalid, half-dressed, and hideous to a degree that cannot be told; a savage silence reigned throughout, unbroken except by the sound of unceasing looms, and the clank of chains from the prison above.

I was summoning courage to proceed, when the guide directed my attention to the village inn!—one of those delectable dens, where, on a little table at the door—a specimen of the dainties within—were ranged collections of dry shell-fish alternating with decaying heaps of fruit; over the entrance, in horrible irony, was inscribed "Café de la Gaieté!" All this was

nearly too much to bear, but by a superhuman effort I roused my sickening soul, and rushed through the pestilential street till I reached the gate of the fortress. This somewhat restored me. With its massive flanking towers and small strong portals, it wears an aspect truly feudal. The church, too, which is in the earliest Norman period, with the peculiar disposition of the pillars of the crypt, well repays inspection, though the interior is almost entirely concealed by a framework of wood which the dilapidated condition of the central tower has rendered necessary as a support.

I should mention a very remarkable cloister, in connexion with the church, whose double ranges of pointed arcades and exquisitely sculptured foliage bespeak a Moorish architect. They are composed of free-stone, which must have been brought from a considerable distance, all the rest, and the other buildings of the Mount, being entirely of granite. There is something very curious in the presence of this *bijou* of Saracenic architecture in the midst of all the stern Norman handiwork.

The only agreeable association connected with the spot, is the destruction of the *iron cage* by King Louis Philippe. This cage was called iron probably because it was formed on the Bajazet principle, so that to stand or lie down was impossible. Unlike Bajazet's, however, this cage was made of wood formed of enormous logs, between which were interstices of three and four finger breadths. It was employed in its origin for prisoners charged with political offences, but for some time before Louis Philippe's visit, had been used only for the more violent of the ordinary captives.

The Duchess of Orleans, with her children, visiting the Mount St. Michael, Louis Philippe, then Duke of Chartres, expressed great curiosity to see this famous cage. Having inspected it, he expressed his horror at so cruel a contrivance being still in use, when the prior replied, that it was his intention to destroy the cage before long, as Count d'Artois (afterwards Charles X.) had ordered its demolition.

The Duke therefore requested that the order might be immediately obeyed, and that his

might be the holy task to carry it into execution. He then had all the inmates of the prison collected, and amidst the acclamations and applause of the standers by, the boy struck the first blow with his axe to this monument of cruelty, and in a few minutes its fragments strewed the ground.

The Swiss, who had the privilege of shewing the cage to strangers, alone looked disappointed at the affair, whereupon the Duke of Chartres presented him with ten louis d'ors, and said, "My good Swiss, though your cage is gone, you can gratify your visitors more than ever by shewing the place where it stood."

I had hoped to wander undisturbed through the conventual buildings, but I found it difficult even to obtain a sight of them, for they and the fortress have been converted into a state-prison. Till lately both male and female offenders were confined here, but a short time ago it was judged expedient to transfer the latter to Bicêtre. I had heard a great deal of the Hall of the Chevaliers, where the order held their chapter, and had hoped to tread its aisles in

peace and quietness, but I found this was not shown to strangers, being used as a place where the principal criminals, are kept at hard labour at the looms. However, I persuaded my guide to give me a glimpse, and a nobler hall was never "condemned to uses vile." It is divided into four aisles by three ranges of columns supporting a vaulted roof, and has an air of peculiar grandeur and refinement. The place resounded with the harsh sounds of the looms, which are kept perpetually at work.

And this was the Mount St. Michael that looked from Avranches so mysterious and inviting. I came thinking I should have passed through an odoriferous and romantic village to the stillness of uninvaded cloisters and the quiet of stately halls, where I might have walked and lingered at my will—I found a squalid, pestilential hamlet, and a prison resounding with the toils of criminals, while the genius of captivity brooded like a curse over all.

Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown—
It must, or we shall rue it.
We have a vision of our own,
Ah! why should we undo it.

CHAPTER X.

MORTAIN.—ABBEY BLANCHE.—MR. FAYEL.—CAPTAIN COUCY.

* * A ruin amid ruins.

Byron.

He had lived for his love, for his country he died ;
They were all that to earth had entwined him.

Moore.

At Mount St. Michael we have reached the westernmost point of Lower Normandy and returning towards the Seine, we repass Avranches. The next town is Mortain.

If you have ever enjoyed the valleys of the Bernese Oberland, or the scenery that surrounds Tivoli, you may spend some pleasant days in lingering through the delicious environs of Mortain, that revive at every step your Swiss or Italian impressions.

In old times this place possessed a fortress of uncommon strength, within whose walls the English princes often sojourned. A rock, connected by a narrow path with the neighbouring mountain, still supports a tower which formed part of this fortress. It is all that remains. The rest has been demolished to make way for the sub-prefect's house.

The ancient abbeys of Blanche, two miles, and Savigny, twelve miles distant from Mortain, are fine relics of the middle ages.

I could not forbear loitering here for a few days, and one afternoon cantered over to the abbey Blanche. It lies in a wild and silent valley, remote from the rush of life, and calm as when the wimpled nun paced its uninvaded cloisters six hundred years ago.

Fairly, as I struck in between the hills, shewed the old abbey church far off, like a gray foam-cloud in the valley, risen out of the pause of its river. As I approached, a rosy glow came over arch, and pillar, and parapet, from the sun's declining rays — it seemed as though the venerable building blushed to feel the green

ivy's close embrace. Seated near an angle of the mouldering cloister, with a drawing-frame before him, an old man was deeply engaged in sketching the abbey.

He was in perfect keeping with the scene. Over his shoulders, bent with age, fell a profusion of hair white as the untrodden snow. His fine lineaments were set with innumerable wrinkles, but the eye, though hollow, glowed with all the fire of youth. His figure was extremely spare, yet of excellent symmetry, and the small hands and feet, as well as the aspiring outline of the features, bespoke beyond mistake, the Norman gentleman.

To meet in so lone a spot, without exchanging a few words, would have been awkward. Raising my hat, I advanced towards the old man and offered some formal remark upon the scene before us, and the exceeding beauty of its character at that moment.

He lifted his head from the drawing, and replied, to my surprise, in English. "Yes; I know nothing finer than the view from this point. I have long been trying to find an

opportunity to take the sketch I am about, but this is the first time for years that I have caught it in this peculiar light. I have been confined to my house from illness for a long time, and should not have ventured here so late this afternoon had I not felt sure of the light I wanted. I should not wonder if this were the last essay of my pencil."

There was something prophetic in his tone, as he pronounced these words, and I referred hopefully to the extreme mildness of the evening.

He shook his head.

"Sit on this ruined pillar beside me," resumed the old man, "and you will perceive what an excellent point of view I have selected."

"I did so;" and he continued; "you see the western hill intercepts the lower rays of the sun, and while the upper portion of the building receives a glow that accurately traces its *silhouette*, the nether part remains in picturesque shade. Then how well the church comes in there, and that broken ivy-bound parapet and the gloomy mountain beyond, backing the

whole. Then turn and look towards dear Mortain. What delicious glimpses of rich country contrast with this rugged spot, and suggest the soft scenes beyond, where the labour of the peasant raises smiling gardens round many a happy home; and the blue sky hangs like a blessing over all."

The old man paused a moment, and then added, "O, sir! it is a beautiful world, and grows doubly beautiful as it passes from my eyes. I have had more than my share of it, sorrows as well as joys, and yet am loath to go. There are some men indifferent to the loveliness of nature, but trust me, to those who sympathise as I do, with the mountain, the river, the forest, the thousand glorious objects around us,—it is a bitter thing to die! and then to hear no more the voice of friendship,"—and he added, hesitatingly, "never again to see the face, the picture even, of her we loved!"

As he spoke the last words, the old man sighed, and I turned my head half away. I thought he would like to dry unnoticed the tear that had fallen upon his drawing.

Suddenly he resumed:—"Stranger, pardon my freedom. You are young. Open your heart to sympathy with all the loveliness of life, lest your latter years be shaded by the remorse that you have not understood the worth of the treasures within your grasp, and failed to cherish duly the bounties of heaven."

Wishing to prolong my interview with an individual who had so much interested me, I expressed my surprise that he should be so perfect a master of the English language, even to the accent; whereupon he thus gratified my curiosity:—

"Though I have resided fifty years in this neighbourhood, I was born and passed my youth in England. You see that ruined château yonder, on the shoulder of the hill. It was the residence of my ancestors, the Fayels. They quitted it at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and passing over to England, settled in one of the western counties, where our family has ever since resided. It is needless to mention the circumstances that led to my coming here. Suffice it to say, a severe disappointment"

—Here the old man paused and sighed: I saw the blot on his drawing, and thought of the tear.—"A severe disappointment," he continued, "made my English home irksome to me, and feeling a necessity to change my residence, I took a fancy to come again and visit the cradle of our line. The exceeding beauty of the neighbourhood, as well as its old associations, proved so attractive, that I remained, and have now lost all desire to leave the place."

"The name of Fayel," I said, "recalls a history which I have heard formed the subject of a painting at Coucy Castle, in the Laonois. The hero of the story was the Châtelain Coucy, but a Sieur Fayel was connected in some way with it. If my memory serves, there was a lady, too, in the case, and both the lady and the Sieur Fayel, I remember, resided in the neighbourhood of Mortain. But I forget the circumstances. My meeting you here, and the identity of your name with this gentleman, leads me to hope that you may be able to recollect the particulars of the story. It interested me profoundly at the time, and you

could not do me a greater favour than to relate it."

"I *ought* to recollect the story," rejoined the old man. "That Sieur Fayel was my ancestor. He was the last of our family who resided in yonder ruined château, and the circumstances represented by the painting in Coucy Castle were the cause of his quitting Normandy for an English home."

Perceiving I remained silent, Mr. Fayel proceeded to relate the following story:—

"In the beginning of the sixteenth century, my ancestors were already an ancient family here. They possessed several important seignories, and were the most opulent of the aristocracy in the district. The *Château Fayel* was built by a count of that name, in 1105, just at the time that this abbey was founded by the Earl of Mortain, whose sister Count Fayel had married.

"The Sieur Fayel, the representative of the family at the time I speak of, was extremely unpopular in the neighbourhood. Discourteous and inhospitable to his equals, he was

oppressive to those below him, and stretched his seignorial rights to the utmost. With one of his neighbours alone did he keep up any intercourse. This was a Sieur Argentan, who lived close to Mortain. With him resided a daughter, his only child, whom he destined for the bride of Fayel. A course of extravagance reduced Argentan to the narrowest circumstances, and he calculated the advantage it would be to have his wealthy neighbour for a son-in-law. With this view he cultivated Fayel in every possible manner, humouring his fancies, flattering his pride, and submitting without a murmur to the ebullitions of his imperious temper.

"The haughty Fayel had no sympathy with the fawning Argentan, but, as the latter always insisted on his daughter accompanying him to the Château Fayel, he was a frequent and welcome guest. Lucille Argentan drew her blood from a Scandinavian source, and was an exquisite specimen of the fair, tender beauty of the North. Her mind was of that exalted character; her heart had the depth and truth

usually belonging to such an extraction. She was the only thing in the world that ever found its way to the heart of the cold Fayel. In her presence he was gentle, considerate, almost affectionate, and he endured the father, whom he despised, for the sake of the daughter, whom he loved.

"On the other hand, he was Lucille's abhorrence. His exclusive gentleness and kindness to her, far from making an impression, only deepened her dislike to the general severity and tyranny of his character. The immense disparity in years between them did not diminish this feeling, and she listened with ill-concealed aversion to his addresses urged day by day. Her visits to the Château became almost intolerable.

"This state of things continued for two years. Lucille was just nineteen when the French were defeated by the renegade Bourbon at Biagrassa. During that fatal day, a gallant gentleman named Coucy fought side by side with Bayard. In his last moments he supported the *Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*,

and heard his dying words to the Constable who stood lamenting his fate. 'It is not *I* who am an object of pity; it is *you*, the *traitor*.'

"On his return homeward from Italy, Coucy chanced to pass by Mortain, where he delayed a short time. During his stay he received an invitation to spend a few days at the Château Fayel—you anticipate this part of my relation. —As Desdemona, 'with greedy ear devoured up the Moor's discourse,' so Lucille heard the 'moving accidents' that had befallen the friend of Bayard—and with a like result. Before the third sun had set, the hearts of Coucy and Lucille were one.

"As they separated for the night, the maiden unobserved by her father or Fayel, clasped on Coucy's wrist a bracelet of her golden hair. 'Wear it,' she whispered, 'and think of Lucille.'

"'In life, in death,' said Coucy.

"So they parted.

"They never met again!

"That morning a suspicion of the truth had flashed upon Fayel. He watched Lucille and

Coucy closely through the day, and suspicion grew to certainty. The wandering knight had won what he would have given all his broad lands — nay, life itself, to win — the love of Lucille.

"The following day, an hour before sunrise, Fayel, wild with jealousy and rage, burst into Argentan's apartment, a paper in his hand, 'Here,' he exclaimed, 'take this to your daughter. See she sign it before the morning dawn.'

"Argentan looked at the document. He perceived its terms were a solemn engagement to marry Fayel. This, as I have said, was entirely consonant to Argentan's wishes; but, knowing Lucille's feelings on the subject, he was desirous to postpone any decisive step, trusting to time and his own influence to remove his daughter's aversion to Fayel. He feared this precipitation might be fatal to his hopes, and a prayer for a little delay rose to his lips, but it died away as he encountered Fayel's impatient, fiery gaze.

"He carried the paper to his daughter's apart-

ment. There he remained half an hour, while Fayel paced the corridor, every nerve in agony from his deep suspense. At last Argentan returned with the paper signed.

"'Take it now to the Châtelain's chamber. Shew him Lucille's signature. Tell him his charger and attendant await him at the castle gate, and bid him leave these walls immediately.'

"Argentan dared not disobey. His entrance into the young soldier's apartment roused him, we may suppose, from pleasant dreams. He looked on the paper with a bewildered stare. 'Twas scarcely discernible in the uncertain light that struggled through the lancet window, and the visions from which he had just parted left his apprehension confused. The characters swam before his eyes; at last they settled into truth, and the signature ran thus:—*Lucille Argentan!* 'It is enough,' said Coucy. 'Take it away. I go.'

"As the sun rose over yonder eastern hill the drawbridge of the Château Fayel was lowered, and two horsemen rode forth. On the helmet of the foremost gleamed the crest of Coucy.

"When they had turned the flank of the mountain, and lost sight of the château, Coucy's attendant rode up, and handed him a small scroll of paper. He hastily untied the silken band, and read as follows:—

"'I am the victim of a tyrant's passion, a father's meanness. The signature you saw was affixed under coercion, and, as you know, under age. I might, perhaps, refuse to be bound by it, but Lucille Argentan will never disown her solemn act. Fayel shall have my hand, though it slay me to give it, but my heart is beyond their power. Its every thought, its every affection, follows Coucy wherever he goes. 'LUCILLE.'

"'Thank God! she is true,' exclaimed Coucy, and rode on.

"Before a month had passed the sacrifice was consummated at the altar. Lucille became the Lady Fayel, and

'She firmly did fulfil
Her duties, a devoted wife,
With the stern step of vanquished will,
Walking beneath the night of life.

Cheered by the hope of death's dear rest,
Which, since the heart within her breast
Of natural life was dispossest;
Its strange sustainer there had been.' *

"This struggle to bear up proved too much for her. Ere long the red hectic, the 'Hesperus of the dead,' rose to her cheek, and announced her approaching liberation.

"Meanwhile Coucy, shunning his home in the Laonois, passed over to Hungary, and joined the wars against the Turk. In a severe engagement that took place near Buda he received a mortal wound, and was borne from the field into the town. The sequel of the Châtelain's history I will give you," said the old man, "in the words of an ancient record, which I saw a long time ago among the papers of the Coucy family, by whom it is carefully preserved.

"The Châtelain Coucy," says this manuscript, "languished some days after the battle near Buda; but a little before his death he spoke to a faithful servant of his, that he had

* Shelley, "Rosalind and Helen."

many proofs of his fidelity and truth, but now he had a great business to intrust him with, which he conjured him by all means to do; which was, that after his death he should get his body to be opened, and then to take his heart out of his breast, and put it in an earthen pot to be baked to powder; then to put the powder into a handsome box, with that bracelet of hair he had worn long about his left wrist, which was a lock of the Lady Fayel's hair, and put it among the powder, together with a little note which he had written with his own blood to her; and, after he had given him the rites of burial, to make all the speed he could to France, and deliver the said box to the Lady Fayel.

"The faithful servant did as his master had commanded him, and went to France, and coming one day to the Sieur Fayel's château, he suddenly met him with one of his servants, and examined him, because he knew he was the Châtelain Coucy's servant.

"Finding him faltering in his speech, he searched him, and found the said box in his

pocket, with the note which expressed what was therein. He thereupon dismissed the bearer, with menaces that he should come no more near his house.

"The Sieur Fayel going in, sent for his cook, and delivered him the powder, charging him to make a little well-relished dish, without losing a jot of it, for it was a very costly thing, and commanded him to bring it in himself, after the last course at supper.

"The cook bringing in the dish accordingly, the Sieur Fayel commanded all to avoid the room, and began a serious discourse with his wife. He observed that, since he had married her, she was always melancholy, and he feared she was inclining to a consumption; therefore he had provided her with a very precious cordial, which he was well assured would cure her. Thereupon he made her eat up the whole dish, and afterwards importuning him to know what it was, he told her at last she had eaten Coucy's heart, and so drew the box out of his pocket, and shewed her the note and the bracelet.

"In a sudden exultation of joy, she, with a far-fetched sigh, said, 'This is a precious cordial, indeed,' and so licked the dish. She then added, 'It is so precious that 'tis pity to put ever any meat upon it.'

"As she spoke thus, the Lady Fayel cast the dish violently on the floor, so that it was broken to atoms. She then rose and went to her couch. The next morning she was found stone dead.

"Fayel," continued the old man, in his own words, "was struck with a sudden remorse for the death of his wife. He declared that the following night he heard a voice distinctly announce to him the following sentence, whose terms tradition has preserved in our family: 'Neither the cruel Fayal, nor any one of his descendants, shall live to see his son of age, and in the third century from this his line shall become extinct.'

"This voice was of course the phantasy of a suffering conscience, but it is very singular that hitherto the fancied prophecy has been strictly fulfilled. Fayel soon found his home in-

tolerable, and removed to England, where he married again. The curse fell upon him, and has pursued the Fayels with awful fidelity ever since! I am not superstitious," he added, "but I can't help thinking there is something extraordinary in the fact that this is the third century, and I am the last of the Fayels."

The old man rose as he finished his relation. I expressed the great interest I had felt in it, and would have wished to prolong our conversation; but pleading the chill of the evening air, he drew his cloak round him and took leave of me. To his invitation to pay him a visit in the morning, I replied regretfully that I was obliged to leave Mortain, and proceed on my way. I the more lament that I could not avail myself of his invitation, for I have lately learned, with great sorrow, that the old man is no more.*

* So much of the old man's account as he quotes from the Coucy MS. was related to *Howel* when in France, and will be found in his "*Familiar Letters.*" They correspond with the foregoing account in making the Châtelain Coucy a cotemporary of Bayard's.

CHAPTER XI.

VIRE. — OLIVER BASSELIN. — VAUDEVILLES. — FALAISE. — A WORD ON MILITARY ARCHITECTURE.—THE BENJAMIN OF THE GENTILE WORLD.—HASTINGS THE VIKING.—HASTINGS THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA.—EVREUX.—VERNON. —CHÂTEAU GAILLARD.—CÔTE DES DEUX AMANS.

Where sleeps thy song?
Ah! wherefore hath it lain so long
In idle slumbers?
Quick, thou, the ancient bondage break,
And bid its dreaming soul awake
In airy numbers.

Barry Cornwall.

Beneath those battlements, within those walls,
Power dwelt amid her passions. In proud state
Each feudal chief upheld his armed halls.

Byron.

PROCEEDING towards the Seine from Mortain, we come to Vire, the capital of the Bocage. It is situated on an eminence surrounded by deep ravines. On the highest point stand

the ruins of a Norman fortress, whose old court-yards have been modernized into promenades, and hence the view is magnificent. You look upon the wild and romantic scenes that fed the "fine frenzy" of the poets Castel and Chênedollé; and those valleys at your feet, "fit nurse for a poetic child," inspired the gay numbers of Oliver Basselin.

Basselin was the first who broke through the old monopoly of Song. For many a year the clergy and the knights had appropriated the muse. Between them, poor dear Polyhymnia had become a deplorable twaddler; the "Blessed Virgin" and my "Ladye Love," constituting the sole varieties of her *libretto*. But Basselin opened to her a new sphere, where all that was gay, and cheery, and light-hearted, formed themes of song.

Oliver's father had committed to his son an excellent mill, with considerable water-power, but it wasn't at all in Oliver's way. Water was a liquid to which he had a particular aversion, and leaving the mill to take care of itself, he followed his beloved muse. His affairs, his

mill among the rest, went to the bad, and he was rather glad to see the whole concern taken off his hands and lodged in those of trustees. He then mounted into the "light of song," and as the notes of the skylark from the depth of heaven's blue call up the lingering dawn, so Basselin waked the benighted spirit of poesie with his strains, so free, joyous, and exalting.

Through those vales beneath us wandered the poetic miller, composing his joyous ditties; whose burden was principally the charms of his native place, not forgetting its excellent wines. These valleys were called the Vaux de Vire, and hence the term *Vaudevilles*, originally applied to Basselin's gay and popular ballads. The lover of ancient domestic architecture may enrich his portfolio from the streets of Vire. They abound with specimens still in excellent preservation.

Falaise comes next in our progress towards the Seine. It is raised on an elevated platform, and derives its name from the *falaises* with which it is surrounded.

The château of Falaise, which formed the

model for most of the strongholds in England, is a fine relic of the middle ages. It stands on an elevated promontory surrounded by profound ravines, and is so strong in itself and its position, that you do not wonder it braved nine consecutive sieges. The finest portion is the tower built by Talbot in 1418, after the capture of Falaise by Henry the Fifth, when he was made governor of Normandy. Its four stories and winding stairs still remain, and are in excellent preservation.

The Normans were particularly addicted to building castles. This it seems was not the case with the cognate race of the Saxons, and the absence of castles in England has been said to have much facilitated its conquest by the Normans, inasmuch as Harold's forces were obliged to risk everything upon one decisive encounter.

William felt this forcibly, and sensible that a circumstance favourable on one occasion, might at another time be turned against him, used every endeavour to multiply castles through the land. From this time until the reign of Ste-

phen, the castle-building continued. Under the latter king it is said that eleven hundred and fifteen castles were begun and finished.

There is no particular style by which the construction of these buildings was regulated. There are few of them exactly resembling each other; but for the majority, the Château of Falaise formed the model, and the most perfect were constructed on the following plan:—

The whole site was surrounded by a broad and deep *fosse*, on the inner edge of which stood the wall, usually ten feet thick and from twenty to thirty feet in height. This wall was crowned with a parapet, and *crenels* or battlements furnished with embrasures and *machicolations*—openings through which burning substances, stones, and missiles might be discharged upon the assailants. At proper distances the wall was provided with lofty towers, which formed a necessary flanking defence, enabling the besiegers to see and reach the assailants at its exterior base.

The drawbridge crossing the *fosse* to the great gate was protected by a barbican, an out-

work flanked with towers. The great gate was also placed within towers. The arch under which it stood was armed with a *portcullis* and *machicolations*, similar, and for a similar purpose, to those of the outer walls. The first court was termed the *outer ballium*, in which commonly stood the chapel; a second *fosse*, wall, gate, and tower, enclosed the *inner ballium*, in whose centre was the *keep*, the residence of the owner of the castle and his family, and the last stronghold where resistance might still be made to assailants in possession of the outer fortifications.

Beneath the *keep* were dungeons where the prisoners were confined. In many instances subterranean passages led out from under the keep beyond the exterior walls, as a last hope of escape, should it also fall into the hands of the enemy.

Few branches of military research have been so little attended to as that relating to military architecture. This may be in some degree accounted for by the curious uniformity characterising that art from the days of Cæsar until

the invention of gunpowder. Between those periods it underwent no material transition. From the earliest times, since the use of masonry, the lofty wall with projecting embrasured and machicolated battlements, the towers placed at frequent intervals, and the *fosse* sweeping round the whole, with the drawbridge at the gate—from the earliest times these characteristics have attended all fortified places. From Vitruvius to Errard de Bar le Duc (the inventer of the *Bastion system*,) there seems to have been no essential change. Several new and peculiar features are exhibited, however, in the fortresses arising in the feudal era, though constructed with embattled walls and towers according to the ancient system.

In that era the domestic and military architecture of the country were blended together. The insecurity of society rendered it necessary for every chieftain to fortify his home. Thence arose the *keep*, generally a square tower, as mentioned before, in the centre of the *ballium*, where the chieftain resided with his family. It was a place of great strength, and formed the

last stronghold of the place. Besides the keep there were other minor features added to the old system. Among them was the change of the outer towers from a round to an angular form, the second wall and fosse inside the first, and the arrangements connected with the *barbican* and *portcullis*.

There is one remarkable consideration suggested by the art of ancient military architecture. For once in the history of mankind, a particular science may be said to have entirely attained its professed object. In the absence of domestic treason or dissension, the ravages of famine and pestilence, every strong place, if well garrisoned and defended with a skill and courage equal to that by which it was assailed, might have been pronounced impregnable. If, moreover, we remember the fierce principles of ancient warfare, and consider the great stimulus the energies of a besieged population must have received from the conviction that defeat was certain death, we shall not wonder to what a time sieges were in those days prolonged, and how often they proved unsuccessful.

In ordinary modern warfare a garrison may safely resist behind their last entrenchment with the certain power of an honourable capitulation, but the ancient warrior knew that the certain consequences of capture by assault was death to himself, and outrage worse than death to all that he held dear.

* * * * *

From Chateaux in general, let us return for a while to that immediately before us. History has embalmed the name of Falaise as the birthplace of William the Conqueror, and the native town of his mother, Arlette Vertprey. Duke Robert's heart would be in no danger in these days. The modern Falaisean damsels are curiously ugly. We may think them to be expiating in the Nineteenth century the beauty of the maiden of the Eleventh.

In the château they shew you the small room where the Conqueror was born, and the window looking on the Val d'Ante, where Duke Robert first saw the tanner's daughter. The great distance between the window and the valley has occasioned some tiresome sceptics to doubt

whether the Duke, or even an ordinary mortal could distinguish any body across the interval. Jules Janin gets over the difficulty after a characteristic fashion. He comes to the room where William was born, and ejaculates,—

"Découvrez vous en touchant le seuil de cette niche à l'angle du nord, car c'est dans cette chambre que Guillaume, le plus grand des Normands, a vu le jour. Sombres murailles, tourelles, meurtrières, ponts, perse, planchers, voûtes de pierre, escaliers tournants pratiqués dans les murs, un puits profond, doubles créneaux, souterrains—Sombre majesté de la guerre! Et pourtant, c'est de là que le père de Guillaume entrevit cette belle fille, Arlette, à demi nue, qui d'un pied timide interrogeait l'eau de la fontaine. Elle était seule, l'eau était claire, le ciel était bleu; elle ne savait pas qu'on là regardât de si haut; et encore quand elle l'eût su!

"Mais, disent les critiques,—(He now touches the telescopic question,)—vous qui parlez, verriez-vous de si loin une belle fille qui se baigne? Nous en doutons.

"A quoi je répondrai, que *je ne suis pas le Duc Robert.*

"Arlette, c'est l'histoire de l'emperor Napoleon et de son état.

"Vois-tu mon étoile? disait il en montrant le ciel.

"Non, disait l'homme.

"Eh bien! moi, je la vois, reprenait l'empereur."

One shade of oblivion has never fallen on the romantic story of Duke Robert's attachment. It lives in the hearts of the Falaiseans vivid and fresh as an event of yesterday, and the most popular songs and traditions of the present day are those (and they are very numerous) of which this story is the theme.

* * * *

On that spot where the children are now at play,* Duke William, then too a child, was one day loitering in the sun, when Talvas the Count of Bellesme, Alençon, and Seez, came to visit him. We are all familiar with those remarkable

* The college of Falaise, called "Le College de Caen," is situated within the precincts of the castle walls.

lineaments in which were portrayed, beyond all mortal precedent, rapacity of ambition and inflexibility of will. When Talvas first scanned his features and read in them the adamantine soul, he recognised his master and burst into the exclamation,

"May the curse of Heaven light on you, since through you and your race my power will be laid low, and the fame of my posterity be obscured."*

Count Talvas prophecied truly. The tanner's grandson was still the descendant of Rollo, a scion of that race to whom the mastery of the world seems allotted. From the same race, a counterpart too striking to be omitted, is furnished in our own times. The brightest of earthly crowns was destined for the descendant of Rollo. To that crown was secured by the descendant of another Scandinavian chief, an empire of fifty million souls. That "Kingdom on which the sun never sets," was achieved by the Race of of Rollo. Conquerors alike in the morning and the evening of time, the pro-

* Dumoulin, p. 120, folio.

phecy of Israel for his favourite son, could alone predict their destiny.

"This tract," says Speed, writing of Scandinavia, "by the dispose of the Omnipotent, now brought forth her last-borne Benjamin, who, *devouring the prey in the morning, hath divided the spoil in the evening*, (Gen. c. xlix. v. 27,) and hitherto continued their glorious fame atchieved, which I pray may extend to the last period of times being. For these Normans, first by force got footing in France with the dominion and style of a duke, and next the diadem of this faire empire, the last and most famous monarchs of the same."

I have alluded in the first volume to Hastings the Viking. Of his history no more than a few fragments remain. Mr. Sharon Turner has put these together with much ability, producing a biographical sketch, it is impossible to contemplate without interest and admiration. He enables us to trace a character adorned with many qualities that even in this enlightened age must command respect, and whose worst points, judged by the fierce standard of his own times,

were but the attributes of a hero. He had been nursed on the dread bosom of the dark northern sea. He was familiar with the sentiments of the terrible Regner Lodbrog.* He had been trained in the school of danger with the intrepid Viking Biœrn. When he descended southward his sails were long the terror of both sides of the channel.

He formed a design of reviving the empire of the West, and entered the Mediterranean with the intention of descending on the old seat of power. Mistaking the city Luna for Rome, he attacked and speedily reduced it, but he soon discovered his error, and this geographical mistake induced him to retrace his steps. He next turned towards England and threw himself upon the coast with a handful of followers. For three years he held his ground, and it tasked to the utmost the genius and valour of Alfred, backed by the whole Saxon people, to keep the Norman at bay.

At last finding his forces too inconsiderable to occupy a permanent position, he desisted, and

* See Appendix IV.

indignantly withdrew into France; with strange moderation settling down quietly in the earldom of Chartres, where he passed the remainder of his days in retirement and privacy.* Lest it should seem odd to term this an act of forbearance, I must adduce the authority of William the Conqueror. In addressing his troops before the battle of Hastings, he reminded them that the King of France, with all his people, was unable to withstand their ancestor Hastings, who took of the country as much as he pleased for himself, leaving what he thought proper to the king.†

We hear no more of Hastings, but his line was not extinct. It reappears in John de Hastings, seneschal of Aquitaine, in 1290, one

* We only hear of Hastings once after this, viz. when Rollo first appeared in the Seine. On that occasion Hastings was requested by the king to act as mediator between him and the Normans.

† "Quid potuit rex Francorum bellis proficere cum omni gente quæ est a Lotaringia usque ad Hispaniam contra Hasting antecessorem vestrum, *qui sibi quantum de Francia voluit acquisivit, quantum voluit regi permisit,* dum placuit tenuit, dum sanciatus est ad majora anelans reliquit."—*Brompton,* p. 957.

of the aspirants to the Scottish throne, in right of his grandmother Ada, niece to William the Lion. Again, in 1389, under the coronet of Pembroke,—again in the great Chamberlain, the stay of the White Rose, the victim of Gloucester's treachery — again in the person of George, Earl of Huntingdon, and finally in Warren Hastings, Governor General of India.

The Seneschal, Pembroke, and Huntingdon, were younger branches of the family. All this time the main stock were simple lords of the manor of Daylesford, in Worcestershire, untitled, but wealthy and of high consideration. At the time of the civil wars, however, they were involved in the general ruin of the cavaliers. The Hastings of that time espoused with devotion the cause of the Stuart. The plate went to the Oxford mint—the lands were mortgaged to the utmost. In the next century they were sold. Warren was grandson of the last Hastings of Daylesford.

Warren's parents died while he was yet an infant, and he was thrown on the care of his

distressed grandfather. The child was early sent to the village school, where he studied with the poor, wearing the same dress, sharing the same food, and apparently destined to the same ignoble future. But such a soul was beyond the reach of adverse circumstances, and the very clods about him did not fail to mark the nascent fancies and ambition of the boy. As day by day he wandered through his father's domains now in stranger hands, wild fancies and projects entered his imagination. He heard of the opulence and grandeur of his ancestors, their splendid hospitality, their valour, their loyalty, and listened with eager delight.

"One bright summer day"—such a day as that when Talvas found young William loitering on the sward at Falaise—"the boy, then just seven years old, lay on the bank of the rivulet which flows through the old domain of his house to join the Isis. There, as threescore and ten years later he told the tale, rose in his mind a scheme, which, through all the turns of his eventful career was never abandoned. He would recover the estate which

had belonged to his fathers, — he would be Hastings of Daylesford.

"This purpose, formed in infancy and poverty, grew stronger as his intellect expanded and his fortunes rose. He pursued his plan with that calm but indomitable force of will which was the most striking peculiarity of his character. When under a tropical sun he ruled fifty millions of Asiatics, his hopes, amidst all the cares of war, finance, and legislation" — in the true ancestral spirit of the Norman — "still pointed to Daylesford. And when his long public life, so singularly chequered with good and evil, with glory and obloquy, had at length closed for ever, it was to Daylesford that he retired to die." *

We will not dwell upon his public career; upon the judgment, firmness, and ability, with which he discharged the functions of his first offices in India, and which finally conducted him to the high post of Governor-General —of his struggles with and ultimate triumph over the council—of the marvellous dexterity

* Macaulay's Essays, vol. iii. p. 331.

with which he extricated himself from every complication of embarrassment and peril,—of the subjugation of the fierce Rohillas—the taming of the sanguinary Mahratta,—the reduction of Benares:—of the extraordinary skill with which he transferred the direction of Indian affairs to English hands and reduced their chaotic confusion to order—of the moderate fortune he brought back from a country whence Clive returned a millionaire—of the fortitude with which he bore his protracted and implacable persecution—of how meekly he wore the honors that followed it—of the tranquil and decorous courage with which he died. All this is well known.

That his character is shaded by many and serious blemishes, it is impossible to deny: we must remember the sentence of Nuncomar, we cannot forget Lucknow and Oude. But, taking a review of his long and arduous administration, we must acknowledge that India and England owe a large debt of gratitude to Warren Hastings.

He had diverted the control of affairs into

the only hands equal to the task—the English. He had organized a vast and complex system of government; and it must be remembered that, at the close of the American war, the only quarter of the globe in which the interests of England had not suffered, was where they were committed to the care of Hastings. There, in spite of European and Asiatic foes, the power of England was augmented, her influence enlarged. In India he is still spoken of as the *greatest of the English*, and nurses sing children to sleep with ballads about Sahib Warren Hostein.

I have said that all the splendour and anxieties of his career, left his early resolution unchanged. The Governor-General of India "would still be Hastings of Daylesford." Amid the luxuries and enervating softness of a tropical clime, this true child of the North preserved his early desire—his heart ever yearned for the dear ancestral spot, to be lord of the domain of his fathers, there to pass his declining days, there to die and be buried.

On the very year his trial commenced, the

first part of this wish was accomplished. Daylesford had once more a Hastings for its lord. On the 22nd of August, 1818, the latter portion was fulfilled. On that day he was laid to sleep in the old parish church.

"With all his faults," writes Mr. Macaulay, "and they were neither few nor small, only one cemetery was worthy to contain his remains. In that temple of silence and reconciliation, where the enmities of twenty generations lie buried; in the great abbey, which has during many ages afforded a quiet resting-place to those whose minds and bodies have been shattered by the contentions of the Great Hall, the dust of the illustrious accused should have mingled with the dust of the illustrious accusers. This was not to be. Yet the place of interment was not ill chosen. Behind the chancel of the parish church of Daylesford—in earth which already held the bones of many chiefs of the house of Hastings, was laid the coffin of the greatest man who has ever borne that ancient and widely extended name.

On that very spot, probably, fourscore years

before, the little Warren, meanly clad and scantily fed, had played with the children of ploughmen. Even then his young mind had resolved plans which might be called romantic. Yet, however romantic, it is not likely that they had been so strange as the truth. Not only had the poor orphan retrieved the fallen fortunes of his line,—not only had he repurchased the old lands and rebuilt the old dwelling, he had preserved and extended an empire. He had founded a polity. He had administered government and war with more than the capacity of a Richelieu. He had patronised learning with the judicious liberality of a Cosmo. He had been attacked by the most formidable combination of enemies that ever sought the destruction of a single victim; and over that combination, after a struggle of ten years, he had triumphed. He had at length gone down to his grave in the fulness of age—in peace, after so many troubles; in honour, after so much obloquy.

Those who look upon his character without favour or malevolence will pronounce that in

the two great elements of all social virtue, in respect for the rights of others, and in sympathy for the sufferings of others, he was deficient. His principles were somewhat lax. His heart was somewhat hard.

But while we cannot with truth describe him as either a righteous or a merciful ruler, we cannot regard without admiration the amplitude and fertility of his intellect, his rare talents for command, for administration, and for controversy, his dauntless courage, his honourable poverty, his fervent zeal for the interests of the state, his noble equanimity, tried by both extremes of fortune, and never disturbed by either.

* * * * *

The famous fair of Guibray is held in one of the suburbs of Falaise. This fair was established as long ago as the time of the first Dukes of Normandy, and ordinarily continues for a week. In the church of the suburb is preserved a curious painting of St. Denis, his head in his hand as usual.

We then reach Evreux, one of those spots

in Normandy whose names are preserved in English families, and on an English soil. It was the cradle of the Devereux, premier viscounts of England. It is to-day alive and busy with numberless industrial establishments, factories, mills, workshops of all kinds. And this is a significant fact that those places in Normandy which are to-day most distinguished for industry and vigorous labour, were in the Norman period the especial residences of the nobles.*

The Norman nobility was of a most rational practical kind. It was a nobility of personal qualities, no less than of blood. Noble energy, noble perseverance, noble vigilance of freedom. From a soil and people it has once visited, the virtue of those lofty qualities seems never quite to pass away. We trace the footsteps of the ancient energy and perseverance in the manufacturing and commercial activity of such places, and mark the influence of those free institutions, without which the one is shackled, and the other dies.

* I may instance beside Evreux, Louviers, Rouen, &c.

The cathedral of Evreux offers a most interesting study of comparative architecture. The name belongs to the eleventh century. In the triforium and the clerestory windows rules the ogive. The *flamboyant* style, with many delicate sculptures, appears in the transept and the northern portal, while that of the east exhibits classic improprieties of the *Renaissance*, and subsequent epochs.

The church of St. Taurin is well worth the inspection of the ecclesiologist,—presenting in the apse and part of the northern transept a rare relic of Byzantine architecture; round arches parted by Moorish shafts, and faced with mosaics of red and blue cement. This is said (on what authority I know not) to belong to the time of Duke Richard II.

There is an anecdote connected with Evreux, too characteristic of William the Norman, to be here omitted. One named Witmond, was a native of Evreux. He had become a monk in the convent of St. Croix Leufroy. William knew the man, and wanting a good bishop, sent

for him to England. Witmond refused the mitre in these terms:—

"Thy conquest is a robbery, and I will have no hand in it. The blood which it hath cost lies heavy upon thee, like that of the innocent man upon his murderer; and I will keep my hands clean from it."

When William heard it he said,

"The friar is right, the honest man shall stay in Normandy, and be Archbishop of Rouen."

He was, however, dissuaded from this appointment. The clergy and the people were averse to the supremacy of a man who had dared to speak so boldly to the Conqueror, and William yielded to their representation.

At Vernon we regain the Seine. This is a name that, like Evreux, has been transferred to the British soil, or, as Monsieur Frère expresses it, one of those places, "Où l'aristocratie Anglaise, semblable à l'aigle, qui vient retrouver son nid sur le sommet de hautes montagnes, arrive chaque année et cherche au milieu des ruines les dernières traces de la présence de ces ancêtres." The present Lord Vernon is de-

scended from a baron of the same name, who was lord of this place in the time of the Conqueror. He accompanied William into England, and afterwards settled in Cheshire, with Hugh Lupus, who appointed him one of the barons of his parliament.

Vernon derives a very ancient physiognomy from its narrow tortuous streets, and wooden houses. As I rode into the town I saw two of these in the same street profusely decorated with flowers. Enquiring the cause on my arrival at the Grand Cerf, I learned that it was the celebration of a custom as old as Normandy itself, and now only preserved at Vernon, by which the houses of the betrothed are always adorned with flowers from the hands of their friends, during the two or three days preceding their marriage.

How pleasantly we turn from the jealous utilitarianism of our day to such occasional memorials of those so long gone by! We are transported over wide spaces of intervening years, to the soft simple manners of olden time. We are connected by these traces

of affectionate feeling with once-loving breasts that have been dust for centuries. Nor has this custom (as may be said of most old customs,) less of meaning than of grace. Their happiness was, like our own of to-day, best emblemed by the fading flowers. Every blossom that decked their homes, represented the lovers' joy — glowing, fresh, and perishable — and seemed a kindly warning to their most blissful hour, that happiness and beauty do not last for ever; or, as is expressed in one reading of the proud motto borne by the ancient lords of the place,—*Ver non semper viret.*

Here my faithful pony and I parted company: about to take to the water, I needed him no more. After many charges that he should be well cared for, and hopes that his future treatment might be as good as his merits deserved, he passed into stranger hands. As I do not think it right to discharge him without a character, I must take the liberty of adding, that his tastes were undeniable mediæval, being always ready to stop when castle, abbey, or cathedral engaged my attention; nor can I re-

member any one occasion on which he shewed an impatience to proceed until I had fully sated my curiosity. If such a disposition can recommend him to the traveller, I dare say he may still be found with mine host of the "Grand Cerf."

From Vernon, we float down the river by Pressagny, Portmort, and Bouaffles, to Petit Andely. Here frown the haughty ruins of the Château Gaillard. Of their extent, commanding position, and imposing appearance, no language can convey an idea. It was a favourite spot with Cœur-de-Lion — the delight of his heart. Many of his charters bear date from this, his loved fortress, and in his public acts it is often designated as "his beautiful castle of the rock."

It owed its origin to the mistrust Richard entertained of his powerful neighbour, Philip Augustus, whose attempts in this direction were effectually controlled by this formidable fortress; and it owed its name of Gaillard to its situation of proud mockery and defiance. This great fortress was begun and completed

in the space of twelve months. Richard only lived two years after its completion.

In the hands of Cœur-de-Lion, this impregnable castle gave secure possession of the Norman province; but it was of no avail to his careless dastardly son, who refused to allow more than a handful of troops to garrison the most important point of his territory. How brave they were, and how well they fought, every reader of Dumoulin's history knows. They loathed the wretched, blood-stained John; but for the sake of the father's memory, they fought for the fortress he had raised and loved so well. At last, Roger Lacy, who commanded the garrison, terminated a useless contest, by surrendering, and the Château Gaillard fell.

With it fell Normandy; but before this time the inhabitants of the province had, in a great measure, lost their especial Norman character. The peculiar stamp of that race disappeared gradually, as its best blood was drafted into England.

Though traces were everywhere remaining of the great race that had sojourned here awhile,

French influences and French feelings had begun to circulate, and when the province came into the hands of Philip Augustus, it was more like the falling in of a French fief on the death of its lord, than the re-annexation of that independent territory ceded to the great Rollo by Charles the Simple.

For a brief space it seemed, that the prowess of Henry V, of Talbot and Warwick, was about to restore their sway to the old lords of the soil. But this was not to be. In fact, when Philip Augustus gained possession of Normandy, the cycle of its achievement as a separate power was fulfilled. Three hundred years before it was separated from France, and so severed to become, as it were, a cradle for the Norman spirit, where, apart and alone, it might be fostered and matured, might grow to a knowledge of its strength, and be purified from the last alloy of its early nomade condition.

After the lapse of a century and a half, the Province sent forth its sons, like Death on the pale horse, "conquering and to conquer."

Hauteville le Guichard gave a king to Sicily. Not long after, the son of Arlette founded the noblest empire the world ever saw. A century and a half more, and these derivative kingdoms had drawn off most of her children ; and when Philip Augustus placed his banner on the walls of the Château Gaillard, the purpose of the province so to speak, was effected. It then returned to its natural geographical position as an integral part of the French empire.

The landscape round the Château Gaillard is magnificent, nor was a finer landscape ever adorned with a ruin more picturesque. And how is the glory and interest of the still life enhanced by that of the heroic yet mournful memories that the place brings before us. Here Roger Lacy, his hatred of the man merged in his honour of the king, held out a long and fruitless siege for the wretched John. Here the exiled David Bruce held for a brief space the pageant of a court. Here the frail daughters of Burgundy, Margaret and Blanche,

were imprisoned by their dishonoured husbands; and it witnessed the murder of the latter, when Louis X. found she lived too long, and stood in the way of his marriage with Clementia of Hungary. Charles the Bad was also a captive here for some time, being arrested by order of King John in 1356. In 1418, it resumed its original destination of a fortress: down went the *fleur-de-lys*, and the gales of France resumed their acquaintance with the lion standard. In 1449, it changed masters for the last time; and finally, it was reduced to its present state of ruin by virtue of an ordonnance of Henry IV. for destroying all the strong fortresses in France, considered dangerous within the meaning of its provisions.

Now leaving the Château Gaillard, we pass under fantastic chalky cliffs, rising high on either side, and seeming infected by their neighbourhood to the château,—with so bold and *arrogant* an air do they wear their crown of dark forests. We then enter an archipelago of green willowy islands, through which we

make our way to Roquette, with its large vine-fields. Next, by a succession of villages, to l'Andelle, whose river joins the Seine at the foot of the *Côte des deux Amans.*

The catastrophe which befel the two lovers was a long, long time ago; for Marie of France put the whole thing into verse in the thirteenth century. I will indulge myself in the relation here, only requesting that should it prove too much for your feelings you will call to mind the extreme remoteness of the period and that cases might possibly be found since that time, where the lot of lovers has not been uniformly satisfactory. In these days when young ladies are not so difficult of attainment, though the story has lost nothing of its interest, I grieve to say, its moral is less apparent.

In the times, then, of parental tyranny there lived a certain king, whose daughter was young and "beautiful exceedingly." Upon obtaining the hand of this lady her royal progenitor had laid a most fantastic condition, which was, that the aspiring lover should take the princess in his arms, and run without stopping to the sum-

mit of a mountain which rose behind the tyrant's palace.

In all ages, nature, looking to emergencies, seems to provide a certain number of *green* young men, and several upon this occasion presented themselves. Some only got through the first stage of the probation, that is, took the lady in their arms, then, cooling at the height of the mountain, put her down again. Others tried it but failed.

At last, an adventurous knight appeared, who seemed destined to achieve the difficult exploit. He took the young lady in his arms, and started; — but, instead of doing as young Lochinvar did, and as he ought to have done, (for the lady really liked him) – jumping on his charger and taking another direction, the simple youth actually assailed the hill. He reached the top, but that was all: he laid her gently down,—and then died.

I trust I need hardly say that she was too much of a lady to survive her gallant knight. She died on the spot too. The remorseful parent endeavoured to offer some atonement for

his fatal absurdity, and accordingly erected a grand monastery over a tomb where the lovers lay. All traces of the monastery have long since vanished, though the touching tale survives, embalmed in the tender verse of Marie of France.

CHAPTER XII.

ELOQUENCE OF RIVERS.—JUMIÈGES REVISITED.—AGNES SOREL.—HAVRE.—MODERN FORTIFICATION.—GUNPOWDER AND DISSENT.

There is no moral to this great city like the river that washes its walls.

Bulwer.

Fermossi alfin il cor che balzo tanto.

Pindemonte.

All is gone, save a voice,
That never did yet rejoice.
'Tis sweet and low, 'tis sad and lone,
And it biddeth us love the thing that 's flown.

Barry Cornwall.

THE Rivers of the world are no insignificant chroniclers. The great events of nations seem to collect round their course. How much of the world's ancient history gathers about the flow of the Euphrates, the Tigris, and the Nile? There are records of glory, or of blood, by

every wave the yellow Tiber rolls, while the annals of the middle ages, and of our own times, throng around the Rhine, the Seine, and the Thames.

We are now gliding down the Seine by Elbœuf, Rouen, St. George de Bocherville, Jumièges, Candebec, Tancarville, Lillebonne to Havre. He who with a hearkening imagination has floated down the silver stream has learned lessons of history he will not soon forget. All nations of the western world,—the Celts, the Gauls, the Romans, the Saxons, the Franks, the Normans, the French, the English, have encountered each other on its waters, and dyed them with their blood. The sword has thrown its gleam upon the wave, the faggots of the Inquisition their glare. The prayers of the clergy, the war-cry of the nobles, the groans of the people, have in turn mingled with the echo of its course. The bigot fury of the Huguenots, the vain conspiracies of the League, the idle war of the Fronde,—the poor glory of a Louis XIV., the infamy of a Louis XV., and crowning all, the

tremendous scenes of the Revolution. This the silent witness has beheld that glides beneath our boat and smiling bears it on.

But it may be that its smile is for other histories than these. Rich and prosperous towns, verdant meads, and fertile fields, fringe its course to the sea, and on its ample bosom are borne the products of the artisan's skill, the toils of the labourer, the freights of the merchant,—and shall I speak of softer tales that it could tell? Those four tremendous letters before which the old world trembled—S P Q R—have been reflected in its waters, and passed away; but the influence of four other letters lingers yet, and will, while those waters flow—shall I speak of — LOVE? Of the village dances on the banks,— the moonlight *fêtes* upon the summer waves, the vows that have been sworn, the hearts that have been plighted by the old river-side?

There is but one epithet—as is proper, a French one—that can correctly describe the character of the Seine from Havre to Rouen. It is not savage, it is not soft, it is not grand,

neither is it highly picturesque; but it is beyond all others that I know—*riante.*

The beautifully shaped hills, the well placed church or château, the abrupt rock, the peering hut, are all merged in the luxuriant meadow, the rich corn-field, the smiling village, the active town. Below Caudebec, indeed, where the river grows wider, and the pleasant banks are withdrawn from the eye, it is subject to fierce fits, considerably at variance while they last, with its general *riante* aspect. The people of the country call this *La barre.*

At the flowing of each flood-tide a sound like distant thunder attracts the attention, the river becomes agitated, and a white stripe of foam advances from the sea. The noise increases, the river shudders, and the stripe of foam changes to a mass of furious billows. On they come roaring, careering, and encounter the river's current with a tremendous shock. The Seine bounds high in air—struggles for a moment convulsively—pauses—and then retreats towards its source, swamping the meadows and corn-fields, flooding the green islands, and too often burying the sailor in a watery grave.

Bernardin de St. Pierre has embodied these characteristics of the Seine and its surrounding scenery, in a beautiful little fiction, which may not be uninteresting.

THE ORIGIN OF THE SEINE.

"The daughter of Bacchus, Seine, a nymph of Ceres, accompanied the goddess of Fruit to Gaul, when she went to all the countries in the world in quest of Proserpine. When Ceres had finished her search, her attendant begged that she would give her those meadows which you see before you, in reward for her services. The goddess granted her request, and at the same time bestowed on the daughter of Bacchus the power to make fruit and corn grow wherever she trod. She therefore left Seine in this country, and gave her for playmates and attendants several nymphs, and among others Heve, whom, as Ceres was apprehensive lest the god of the sea might some time or other carry off Seine, as the god of the nether world had done her daughter Proserpine, she charged to watch and guard her.

"One day, when Seine was playing upon the beach, looking for shells, and in sportive glee running away from the waves, which now wetted her feet, now ascended to her knees, Heve, her companion, descried among the billows the white hair, the purple face, and azure mantle of Neptune. The god of the seas came from the Orcades, after an earthquake, and was traversing the ocean, to examine with his trident, whether its foundation had sustained any injury. As soon as she saw him, Heve cried out to warn Seine of the danger that threatened, and the latter immediately fled to the meadows. But the god had perceived the nymph of Ceres, and urged his sea-horses in pursuit of her. He was already near enough to stretch out his arms to grasp her, when Seine implored the aid of her father Bacchus and Ceres her mistress. They heard her prayer. The moment Neptune laid hold of her, the body of the nymph dissolved to water. Her veil and her green garments, with which the wind wantoned, became emerald-tinted waves. She was transformed into a river, which to this day takes delight in traversing those dis-

tricts that the nymph loved to frequent. But the most surprising circumstance of all is that Neptune, in spite of this metamorphosis, has not ceased to be enamoured of Seine, just as the river Alpheus is still said to cherish, a secret love for the fountain Arethusa. But though the god of the sea is still in love with Seine, Seine is equally steadfast in her aversion to him. Twice a-day he pursues her, snorting and roaring; and each time Seine seeks refuge in her meads, hastening back, contrary to the natural direction of rivers, towards her source. And she has ever kept her green waters separate from the azure waves of Neptune.

"Heve died of grief, and a monument of white and black stones was erected for her on the shore. This is the craggy rock which to this day bears the name of Heve, and which has an echo to warn the mariner against danger, as ages ago it apprised the nymph of Ceres of the peril that threatened her.

"The other companions of Seine were metamorphosed, like herself, on the several spots where they happened to be in their flight, and

are now the Aube, the Yonne, the Marne, the Ouse, the Andille, and all the other rivers, which respectfully pay their tribute to their old mistress Seine.

"Amphitrite, when she heard the unwelcome tidings, caused several gulfs to be formed, that they might serve for secure harbours against the fury of her faithless spouse: and these are now the ports which afford an asylum to navigators from the sea to Rouen."

The witty Charles Nodier has thus continued Bernardin's allegory.

"Not long afterwards, Friga, the beautiful Thetis of Gaul, was jealous when she saw Liofne, the Celtic Venus, had obtained the apple, which was the prize of beauty, while she herself had not even been invited to be a candidate for it. She resolved to be revenged. One day, when Liofne had approached the Seine, and was visiting the meads traversed by the nymph, Friga carried off the apple, which Liofne had laid upon a rock, and sowed the pips in the adjacent country, in order to perpetuate her victory. Hence originated the in-

numerable apple-trees, which grow in this country, and perhaps also the spirit of litigation, which, it is said, perpetuates lawsuits among the inhabitants."

Jumièges is the burial-place of Agnes Sorel. It is associated with the final expulsion of the English from Normandy, and in accordance with the plan originally proposed, I stopped here a second time as I passed.

The choir and the Lady-chapel of the cathedral are gone. In the last lay the heart of Agnes. She had endowed this monastery with large estates, and the grateful monks requested that thus much of their benefactress should remain with them, whilst it was decided that at the church of Losches, in Touraine, her beautiful body should be surrendered to decay. They erected a monument here, where Agnes appeared in effigy, offering her heart to the Virgin. The effigy was destroyed by the Huguenots, who at the same time committed horrible excesses in the convent. The monument survived until the revolution, when it shared

the fate of the effigy. The monument bore an inscription in the following terms:—"C'y git Damoiselle Agnes Sewrelle (Sorel) en son vivant Dame de Breanté, d'Issoldun, et Vernon sur Seine, piéteuse aux pauvres, laquelle trespassa le neuvième jour de Fevrier en l'an 1448."

The title "Dame de Breanté," that is, Lady of the Manor of Breanté, has misled many French writers. They generally entitle her "Dame de *Beauté*," which, however, as Mr. Galley Knight observes, is "not far from the mark."

How few the women disposed to turn to good account the influence they may acquire over man! Indeed, most women are incapable of doing so. Furnished by nature with small sympathy for man's higher aspirations, they reluct at purposes they cannot comprehend, and whose pursuit competes with their affection. Thus, as the bracelets of the Sabines slew Tarpei, man is often crushed by the love that should have adorned his life. On the other hand, those who *could* respond to man's

loftier aims, too frequently shrink from the apparent hazard. They conceive their soft dominion is put in jeopardy by the admission to his heart of such formidable competitors as ambition, general benevolence, or the like. They do not understand that lofty desires and a life of earnest action, are the best allies of love. As the heart becomes nobler, its love becomes nobler also. Deeply and truly it cannot love unless it aspires too.

Thus do many women fail of their mission. They regard the love they waken as an end. They should look upon it as a means only to ennoble man. They were sent to make him not so much a lover as a hero; and some such there are — of that order to which belonged Lady Elizabeth Hastings, of whom Congreve said, that "to love her was a liberal education."

Well was it for France that Agnes Sorel trusted to the love of Charles,—that she felt glory might be its associate, without becoming a rival in his heart, and even if it should, she was one who cared not for an undivided empire, unless it were a noble one. And she had her reward.

It was the love of Agnes that drew Charles VII. from the ignoble luxury of his retreat, and matched the Sybarite of Chinon with the conqueror of Agincourt. It was the love of Agnes which awakened that energy before which even Talbot and Warwick recoiled. She lived to see her lover honoured and victorious, and to feel that she was only the dearer to him now, because he was conscious that he deserved her.

Oh, that Niebuhr had exerted a little of his ingenuity to hunt out or invent some facts—to devise and marshal cunning arguments, whereby we might be led to assent to Schiller's view of this question, that the king was not married, and that he offered his hand to the saviour of his country—

> "Zieren wurde sie
> Den ersten thron der Welt, doch sie vershmäht ihn,
> Nur meine liebe will sie seyn und heissen."*

Surely the German ingenuity would be better thus employed than in pulling to pieces our dear old school-room faith in the kings of Rome, and dissipating so many other boyish

* "Die Jungfrau von Orleans." Act 1, Sc. 1.

allusions, whose beauty was better than all his truth. But, under present circumstances, with our present lights, we cannot get Marie of Anjou out of the way. And if it be said, therefore, that my observations on the influence of woman are misplaced, by reason of Agnes's position, let me remind you that it was at the earnest and repeated solicitations of Marie that she came to the court of Charles; that the beautiful maid of honour ever found her best friend in the Queen; and it is not too much to ask you to look upon the favourite with the eyes of the loving wife.

Agnes was born at Fromenteau in Touraine, 1409. She was of surpassing beauty; her complexion, in particular, has been spoken of as something unearthly,—her intellectual qualities were of an equally rare order, and her admirable natural abilities were seconded by a most careful education. At the age of fifteen she was appointed maid of honour to Isabel de Lorraine, Duchess of Anjou, one of the most distinguished women of her time. When this lady visited the court in 1431, Agnes, called

La Demoiselle de Fromenteau, accompanied her. The beauty of the Demoiselle was then in its meridian splendour, and nothing could equal the refinement and liveliness of her mind; her conversation was so superior to that of the women of the day, that a contemporary author says she was regarded as a prodigy.

Such a being might have won a more difficult heart than that of the young king; and Charles VII. became desperately enamoured of Agnes. The queen was also greatly attracted towards the Demoiselle and appointed her to the same post near her person, that she held with the Duchess of Anjou. These feelings never underwent a change. To the last the queen and Agnes continued on terms of the strictest amity.

Charles was known to be brave. He had proved this at the siege of Montereau, where he scaled the walls, sword in hand, and exposed himself to the greatest danger, performing prodigies of valour. However, his spirit had been gradually sinking under a series of disasters, and after the fatal battle of Verneuil, he gave himself up to despair. Vainly did the queen

endeavour to rouse him. She dwelt upon his responsibility to France, the claims of his people, his own great name—but her words fell upon a dull cold ear. The loved Agnes tried her skill in vain. She brought all the powers of language to aid the cause of honour and of France. She painted, in glowing colours, the misery of the land; the boasts of the haughty Bedford; the domineering English troops; his own shaded reputation. Long and faithfully she urged him. She appealed to the love he professed to cherish,—to her deep affection for him—In vain.

As Agnes was one day urging the king to shake off his despair, an astrologer chanced to be introduced, of whom she inquired her destiny. The answer was, that she should long enjoy the love of a great king. Agnes, seizing the opportunity, rose, advanced towards Charles, and making a profound obeisance, demanded permission to withdraw to the English court in order to fulfil her destiny.

"Sire," she said, "the prediction can only have reference to King Henry, for you are

about to lose your crown, and he to unite it with his own."

It is supposed that the prediction was an artifice contrived by Agnes as a last resource; however, it succeeded. "These words," says Brantome, "so violently affected the king, that he burst into tears, and rushed from the chamber; then taking courage, he quitted the chase, his cooks, his gardens, and his goodness and valour speedily succeeded in driving the English out of France."

There are two spots in Normandy to which the true lover of the glory of France must ever reverently advert, the Place de la Pucelle, at Rouen,—the ruined church of Jumièges. The names of Joan of Arc and Agnes Sorel, are indissolubly interwoven with the glory and the very existence of France. The love of the one, the devotion of the other, prevailed against the *prestige* of the Saxo-Norman race, and wrung from the bravest troops that ever raised the lion-standard, the fruits of Cressy, Poictiers, and Agincourt. And what was their reward! "That admirable heroine," to use the words of

Hume, "to whom the more generous superstition of the ancient world would have erected altars, was, on the pretence of heresy and magic, delivered over to the flames, and expiated by that dreadful punishment the signal services she had rendered to her prince and her native country." Scarcely less dreadful was the "punishment" of Agnes. It came, too, from one who, next to Charles, owed her most.*

The king's successes and the expulsion of the English, drew to Agnes the favour of every individual in France, with the exception of the Dauphin. He conceived a hatred towards her as violent as his father's love, and the brutality of the future Louis XI. shewed itself one day at Chinon, when Louis actually forgot himself so much as to strike her. Agnes retired to a castle which the king had given her at Losches. Here she remained absent from the court for five years. Towards the end of the year 1449, at

* Talking of gratitude, we may make this remark. The throne of the Capets may be said to owe its existence to women. It is remarkable that it should be the only one in Western Europe from which women are excluded.

the earnest entreaty of the queen, she was induced to return to court. She subsequently went to reside at Mesnil, close to Jumièges.

Charles retired to winter at the latter place, after the taking of Rouen, and Agnes occasionally attended his court while there. One morning a messenger came to announce that she was taken suddenly ill. The king hurried to Mesnil. She was in the agonies of death; after six hours of dreadful suffering exhausted nature granted a moment's respite. She blessed her lover's name;—she thanked him for his unchanging affection, then, calmly laying her head on his shoulder, she smiled and expired.

"In questa forma,
"Passa la bella donna e par che dorma."

She was poisoned!* Every one suspected from whose hand the poison came; and the subsequent life of Louis the Eleventh confirmed the surmises his ill-concealed hatred to Agnes had given rise to.

* I adopt the generally received account, that Agnes was poisoned by order of Louis XI.

Her death called forth unaffected and universal regret. Her loveliness and rare qualities of mind and heart, had won upon all ranks and orders. Until the revolution, there was preserved in the chapter-house at Losches a manuscript containing a thousand Latin sonnets, all acrostics, in praise of Agnes. Francis the First has recorded his sense of the debt which France owed to her in the following lines:—

"Gentille Agnès plus d'honneur tu merites
La cause étant de France recouvrer
Que ce que peut dedans un cloitre ouvrer
Clause nonain ou bien dévot hermite."

* * * *

Our wanderings that commenced among those scenes associated with the name of Rollo, terminate at Jumièges; where we are brought to the period when France became entirely separated from the Race he first led to her soil.

The reluctance with which this separation was viewed, and the tenacity with which England adhered to the claims whose assertion cost her so much treasure and blood, is witnessed by the

length of time the *fleur-de-lis* was retained in the national blazonry. But time has taught us to regard the question with wiser eyes, and to see in this circumstance, regarded by our ancestors with so much regret, one of the conditions of England's progress and prosperity. We perceive that her attention, now liberated from continental concerns, was turned to her maritime interests, which henceforward were better understood and more steadily pursued. We observe that the nation began at this period to flourish all at once, and rose to a position in Europe vastly more considerable than when her princes were possessed of a larger territory and her councils distracted by foreign interests.

* * * * *

Havre is well known to our travelling countrymen. Few of us have not been through it some time or other, on our way eastward. Few of us have prolonged our stay beyond what was absolutely necessary. The minimum of interest is its portion, and that interest entirely of to-

day,—the most commonplace of to-day. The spirit of traffic impregnates the very air. Every object suggests the idea of vendor and purchaser. The stamp of *l s d* is on all things,—all ends of life are resolved into—to buy, to sell. Here Commerce sits upon a throne; with one hand she receives the mingled produce of the western world, with the other she commits it to the Seine, and distributes it over Europe.

The secret of Havre's prosperity is revealed in Napoleon's characteristic description. "Havre, Rouen, and Paris, are a town of which the Seine is the street." We are amazed, however, to find that its obvious destination, as the western port of France, was not entirely recognised until so late as 1787. It is true that by virtue of its position and natural capabilities, it had been gradually rising from the time of Francis I. and by degrees eclipsing its neighbour, Dieppe; but it was not until Louis XVI. lent it his especial countenance, enlarging the harbour, strengthening the fortifications, and originating many other improvements, that its ancient rivals sunk under the competition. Nantes and Bor-

deaux declined into comparative unimportance, and Dieppe was reduced to a mere fishing-port.

One antiquity Havre does possess, that is, the fair of Ingouville, which is still held in the eastern suburb. It is, however, now but a shadow of what it was,—a poor collection of toy booths and merry-go-rounds. Here, again, is the Present elbowing out the Past. From fairs were derived the first rude ideas of the great system to which traffic was reducible. The means of its development were thus suggested. In their arms, as it were, the spirit of Commerce was born, nursed, and introduced to the world. Here we find the offspring grown to gigantic maturity, while the mother that gave birth and nursed, is despised and put by. Ever in the presence of the more powerful life of Havre's commerce, the fair of Ingouville is dwindling away, and soon will become extinct.

The defences of Havre present an admirable specimen of modern fortification. They were designed and executed under the superintendance of that consummate master in the art, Na-

poleon. To the uninitiated these defences have anything but a formidable appearance; and it is amusing to conjecture the astonishment a warrior of the twelfth or thirteenth century, would discover, at hearing that this town was almost impregnable. He would see nothing between its suburbs and the surrounding country but low, circular mounds, and slopes of slight elevation. "Where," he would ask, "is the massive tower—where the lofty battlement enabling you to command an approaching enemy?—Where the high wall which alone can secure a town against surprise?"

His astonishment, however, would cease when led to view the component parts of the defences. The moat so wide and deep, the high wall unseen till you are close beside it, and the rows of mysterious hollow tubes, every one of them following your change of position, like the eyes of a portrait, all seeming placed on purpose to guard the particular point you are approaching—he would cease to be surprised when he inspected these details, and learned the modern contrivances for destruction. Above

all, that subtle agent which has rendered necessary this new style of fortification.

He would comprehend that the towers and battlements, on which a tempest of stones and arrows might have rained for years, would be altogether ineffectual against artillery, and that the elevation to command the enemy's approach must be attained by a rampart of such material as to be insensible to the tremendous missiles of modern invention. It is true that a town is as liable to surprise now as in the middle ages, and therefore a high wall remains as essential an ingredient of modern, as it was of mediæval fortification. While, then, it is necessary to retain this feature common to the defences of both periods, it becomes also necessary to conceal the wall so as to protect it from the new agent which human ingenuity has placed in the power of the besiegers of to-day. This difficulty the ante-gunpowder warrior would see, on inspecting these defences closely, has been mastered by the cunning of modern fortification in the following simple manner:—

The *bastion* has been substituted for the outer wall of the middle ages. Instead of the ancient arrow-proof parapet, the parapet is now a huge bank of earth twenty feet thick. This is faced externally by a *wall*, which must be so high as to render the chance of an enemy entering by surprise hopeless, and so concealed that no part of it can be seen from any spot in the neighbourhood within range of artillery.

To effect this the foundation rests in the bottom of a ditch, so deep that one half of the wall is sunk below the level of the country; the remaining half, which rises above the general surface of the ground, is protected by raising the outer edge of the ditch, and in order that the cannon of the garrison may command this elevated portion, as well as the whole surrounding country within its range, the rampart is raised somewhat above the summit of the wall with which it is faced, consequently the besiegers are everywhere open to the fire of the fortress, and cannot approach without being exposed to almost certain destruction. On the other hand the very summit of the rampart

is all that is visible to an advancing party, and this being composed of earth with an external slope, is very little affected by cannon-shot, which bury themselves in the soil, doing hardly any damage.

Thus have the arts of defence kept equal pace with those of destruction; but between them both all that was picturesque in military architecture has vanished for ever. Here, as in other departments, each step of Progress has trampled upon some flowers of the Past. The stately castle is no more; and huge mounds of earth have succeeded to the picturesque ramparts of the middle ages.

Gunpowder was to Military, what Dissent has been to Ecclesiastical Architecture. Little deemed Schwartz when engaged with his dread invention in the laboratory at Cologne, that he was making out the death-warrant of embattled tower and graceful parapet. Nor did Luther, when preaching his first sermon against indulgences, imagine he was sounding the knell of the cathedral. No more shall we see the according piety of an entire district represented

in one of those magnificent structures, that at once evidenced and called to unity, rebuked presumption, and raised to prayer. The Minster and the Battlement belong to other generations, —such will be raised no more!

APPENDIX.

I.

NOTE ON THE DISCOVERY AND CONQUEST OF THE CANARIES BY JOHN DE BÉTHENCOURT, BARON OF GRAINVILLE, IN NORMANDY.

This sketch is principally taken from an account of Bontier and Le Verrier, two men who accompanied Béthencourt in the capacity of chaplains, and were eye-witnesses of the events recorded. Their MS. was obtained from the archives of Gallien de Béthencourt, Conseiller de Parlement of Rouen, and published by Bergeron. Joseph de Viera y Clavijo (*Noticias de la Historia de las Islas de Canaria*), and Glas (*Translation of a manuscript* written *by Juan de Galeneo*, a Franciscan friar,

and found in a convent in the island of Palma, about a hundred and fifty years ago), have also been consulted.

Pietro Guirino, a Venetian noble, who, in 1431, passed the Straits of Gibraltar, on a trading expedition to the north, tells us that in endeavouring to avoid the vicinity of Cape St. Vincent, he fell in with contrary winds, and being driven westward, was detained for forty-five days among the Canaries; "luoghi (says Guirino) incogniti e spaventosi a tutti i marinari, massimamenti delle parti nostre." Nevertheless, these places, so "unknown and terrible," had been frequented for more than a century by the Normans, and owned at that very moment a Norman for their king.

It is certain that the Portuguese, who claimed to be the discoverers of the north-west coasts of Africa, and the adjacent islands, were only the revivers of the Norman discoveries.

As early as the year 846, the Normans, with powerful fleets, passed the Straits of Gibraltar,

and established posts at Cordova and Alicant; and some writers* refer to this period the discovery of the Azores by them. In subsequent years they pushed their adventures far to the south, and we know from Labat, that at the beginning of the fourteenth century the descendants of these men, now settled in France, were in the habit of trading as far as Sierra Leone.

Though we must therefore presume that the Normans had, long before the year 1326, touched at the Canaries, yet it was in that year that the first certain intelligence concerning their existence which had reached Europe since the decline of the Roman empire, was brought thither by the crew of a French vessel, which had been driven upon the coast of one of the islands in a storm.

From the time of Homer a belief had prevailed that far away under the sunset skies, and attainable by man in the flesh, there smiled some blessed isles, where sorrow was unknown. When Sertorius was in Africa, these islands

* Murr. p. 55; De Guignes, "Extraits des MSS. du Roi," t. ii., p. 58.

were described to him in such attractive colours, that he expressed a deep wish to retire thither to end his days. As the gentle hind that followed his steps through the pomp and turmoil of the Roman camp, so a yearning for repose pursued his heart through all the glory and tumult of his career. It whispered him to withdraw from the noise of war and the clamours of envy, and, despite the call of ambition, had almost won him to this blissful retreat.* Pliny, Ptolemy, and Strabo had all painted the *Fortunatæ Insulæ* in glowing colours, and Plutarch represented them as the Elysian fields of Homer.

After the lapse of more than eleven centuries, they were again brought to public notice by the accidental circumstance I have mentioned, and began to be much talked of in Europe. Before long, a Spanish nobleman, Count of Claramonte, Don Luis de la Cerda, procured a grant of these islands from Pope Clement the Sixth, with the title of king, on condition of his causing the Gospel to be

* Plutarch, *in vitâ Sertor.*

preached to the natives. Thereupon Don Luis obtained leave from Pedro King of Arragon to fit out a fleet in his ports, with a view to take possession of the islands; but dying immediately after, the expedition failed.

At this time, John de Béthencourt, a Norman baron of Grainville, in the Pays de Caux, descended from Buttecourt, one of the companions in arms of William the Conqueror,* was moved to do something worthy of his ancestors, and conceived the design of subjugating the Canaries, and converting the inhabitants to the true faith.† Accordingly, he determined to seek assistance from his uncle, who was then in Spain. His uncle was Rabin de Bracamonte, Admiral of France, who, with Bertrand, Claquin, Constable, and other Norman gentlemen, had gone to Spain to assist Henry III. in his wars with Portugal. As a first step, however, he sold some of his lands in Normandy, and mortgaged other parts. Then, having engaged several Norman gentlemen to accompany his fortunes, he set

* Viera, vol. i. 373. † Bontier and Le Verrier.

out for Spain. Having stopped at Rochelle, he made the acquaintance of Gadifer de la Sala, a gentleman of considerable fortune, who, after the fashion of the times, was looking out for adventure; and, after some consultation, it was agreed that Gadifer should join the expedition, and that they should go direct to the Canaries. On the 1st of May, 1400, they set sail with three ships, and about two hundred persons, and soon came in sight of the islands.

The Canaries are seven in number, lying westward from the African Coast in the following order:—Lancerota, Fuertaventura, Canaria, Tenerife, Gomera, Hiero or Ferro, and Palma.

The aborigines of the Canaries are supposed by some to be the descendants of the ten tribes, carried into captivity by the Assyrians,* but there is little doubt, from the great similarity of customs and language with the inhabitants of South Barbary, that they came from thence originally. This must have been, however, subsequently to the time Pliny wrote (for he speaks of the islands as uninhabited), and before the

* Glas's "History of the Canaries." (*Trans.*)

conquest of Barbary by the Arabs, as we do not find any trace of the ceremonies of the Mahommedan religion among them.

At first view the islands looked anything but promising. They were rugged and barren, and apparently destitute of any manner of shelter. Bleak rocks shewed themselves here and there, and the coast appeared to present difficult landings on all sides; so that the first appearance of the Canaries by no means realized the reports of the ancient geographers. Lancerota and Fuertaventura especially are exposed to the north-west wind, which blows very constantly and severely, and not a tree was to be seen on their surfaces.

It was at Lancerota that the Normans first descended. The natives came down to the coast in great numbers to oppose them. They advanced in good order, clothed in their fierce-looking *tomarcos*;* their long beards fell down plaited in front; their hair streamed behind. In the front marched their King Guadarfia, distin-

* The *tomarcos* were cloaks made of goat's skin, reaching to the knee, with a hood resembling a capuchin friar.

guished from the rest by a lofty goat-skin diadem, shaped like a mitre, and adorned with shells. Altogether they looked wild and formidable enough. They seemed in no disposition, however, to be the first assailants, and the Normans, seeing them stand aloof, proceeded to encamp themselves, which they were suffered to do without interruption.

The natives, finding the strangers shewed no intention of molesting them, took courage, and even came into the camp, where Béthencourt received them with the greatest courtesy and kindness. This behaviour so assured these savages, who were naturally of a most friendly temper, that when the Normans began to build a fort they even assisted by bringing stones and lime. This fort was built at the harbour where they landed, and called Rubicon.

Béthencourt, finding the natives of Lancerota so peaceably inclined and well-disposed, determined to pass over at once to Fuertaventura, which was separated from it by a narrow channel. Leaving an officer and a few men in charge of the fort of Rubicon, he embarked

again, and, crossing the strait, landed at a place called Valtarrahala; but, the natives came down in such numbers, and exhibited such a hostile demeanour, that Béthencourt thought it imprudent to risk an encounter with his handful of men. He therefore re-embarked, and having made a tour of the islands, returned to Lancerota. Finding, from the number, size, and population of the Canaries, that it was vain to think of reducing them with his few followers, it was determined that Gadifer should go back to France for reinforcements. Gadifer, however, died soon after reaching the continent, and Béthencourt finding himself thus deprived of his expected succours, resolved to apply to his uncle Bracamonte. He accordingly passed over to Spain, leaving one Bertin de Berneval in charge of Lancerota at Rubicon.

Through the influence of Bracamonte, and his friendship with the Infant Don Ferdinand, afterward King of Arragon, Béthencourt was supplied with the means of providing and equipping a considerable force. He returned to Lan-

cerota with the title of king,* conferred on him by a grant of Henry III., dated 1403.

Meantime Berneval, during the absence of Béthencourt, had conducted himself towards the natives in so cruel and arbitrary a manner, that they rose against him; and, having attacked and killed some of his men, drove the rest into Rubicon, where they closely besieged them. Such was the state of things when Béthencourt returned from Spain: the natives received him gladly, knowing that justice would be done them. An inquiry was immediately instituted by Béthencourt, who, finding the conduct of his men had fully justified the proceedings of the natives, pardoned them at once, and restored Guadarfia to all his lands and property, of which he had been deprived. Upon this the natives laid down their arms, and cheerfully submitted to his government.

The next step of Béthencourt (who seems to have been inspired more with the spirit of a missionary than a conqueror) was to

* Moreri, in his "Dictionary," gives him this title; so Bontier and Le Verrier; so also Glas.

build a church, which he dedicated to St. Marcial. He had not omitted to bring over some priests from Spain, and they soon succeeded in converting the natives. Guadarfia was the first to be baptised, and the rest of the islanders soon followed his example.

All being settled, and his authority firmly established at Lancerota, Béthencourt thought of reducing Fuertaventura. Knowing that the inhabitants were very numerous and warlike, he took with him a strong force. His new recruits served him with alacrity, they regarding him rather as a father than a general.

Fuertaventura was at this time divided between two Guanaremes, or chiefs, Ajose and Guise. They carried on their government under the advice and dictation of two Egerias, named Tibiatin and Tamonante. These two women were held in great veneration by the islanders, who referred to them for the settlement of their differences, and the regulation of their ceremonies.

The Fuertaventurans joined their forces, and, headed by Ajose and Guise, advanced

in great numbers against the Normans as they disembarked at Valtarrahala. They were in the act of making a tremendous onset, when Tibiatin and Tamonante rushed to the front of the line, and bade them forbear. They had often prophecied that strange people would come over the sea, who would instruct them how to live and be happy, and they declared to the savages that they recognised in these strangers the people of whom they had spoken.

The Mahay and Altihay, as they called their most distinguished warriors, were strongly disposed to measure their strength with the Normans; but Tibiatin and Tamonante had influence enough to bring about a conference with Béthencourt. He gave them to understand that he desired not to injure them, but only that they should embrace the Catholic religion; and, having done so, that they should be left in possession of all their lands and goods. The eloquence of Béthencourt prevailed; Ajose was first induced to receive baptism, Guise and the two Egerias followed his example, and

the conversion of the rest was then a matter of course.

Béthencourt next built two forts, one at Valtarrabala and another at a place called Richiorche; and, leaving a small garrison, he proceeded to the third island in the group, Canaria.

The inhabitants of this island were far more numerous and civilised than any of the others. The causes of this, though unknown at the time, were gathered in after years from the traditions and songs of the natives.

It appears that some of the vessels destined to compose the expedition projected by Luis de la Cerda, as above related, actually made their way to the islands at that time; they anchored in a bay of Canaria, and some of the troops went on shore to refresh themselves. None of the natives being then near the shore, the Spaniards thought the island uninhabited, and advanced inland without any precaution. Suddenly they were set upon by the natives, who killed several and made the rest prisoners; their companions, seeing what

had happened, sailed away, and were heard of no more.

The prisoners were treated with kindness, and in the end ingratiated themselves with the savages, whom they instructed in some useful arts, and in the science of war. Unhappily the island was visited with a severe famine: the female infants were destroyed, and it was then suggested to murder the Spaniards, who had lately been guilty of some great excesses. Accordingly they were all either stabbed, or dashed to pieces down the precipices, and thus perished all trace of this part of the expedition of De la Cerda, except what remained in the superior skill and enlightenment of the islanders when the Normans came.

Béthencourt sailed thither with two ships, and anchored in the harbour of Anganagen. Having disembarked, he marched his forces up the country. It was necessary to move with great precaution and slowly, for the surface of the island presented a succession of precipices, and dells, caused by volcanic agencies, and of such a nature as to render an

advance against the smallest resistance next to impossible. Before long, Béthencourt came upon the natives, collected in immense numbers on the crags above him. Presently they rushed down, yelling and flinging stones and javelins with extraordinary force and precision. Béthencourt, with characteristic intrepidity, hurried to the front of his men, and drove back the advancing savages. However, they returned again and again, and threw themselves upon the Norman steel. As one fell another succeeded, and at length, pressed by thousands on every side, Béthencourt was compelled to order a retreat to the ships. They withdrew slowly, and in the best order, Béthencourt covering the rear and strewing the ground with dead. Shortly before reaching the place of embarkation, Artemis, the leader and king of the savages, fell; whereat they were so disheartened, that the Normans were suffered to embark without further molestation.

Baffled at Canaria, Béthencourt resolved to attempt the reduction of Gomera, and turned his prow thither. Here he landed without

opposition, but apprehensive of an ambuscade, he advanced with caution. Soon, however, to their astonishment, the Normans beheld a number of the natives coming dancing and singing to meet them. They were still more surprised when the savages addressed them in Spanish, and welcomed them to their island. They then told them that about thirty years before, a Spanish vessel had touched at Gomera, and remained some weeks. These visitors behaved in the most friendly manner, and made the Gomerians many presents. On going away they left a priest behind, who had instructed many of them in Spanish, and taught them the Christian religion. The priest had died to their great sorrow a few years before, but had left behind him the greatest feeling of respect for the Spanish name.

Béthencourt was so pleased with his reception here, and with the beauty and salubrity of the island, that he determined after he had established his authority throughout the Canaries, to return and end his days in the pleasant island of Gomera.

From Gomera, Béthencourt proceeded to the adjacent island of Hiero. Here he was received with the same demonstrations of joy as at Gomera. He owed this favourable reception to a cause similar to that which crowned his expedition to Fuertaventura with success. A prophet, named Yore, had formerly lived among the inhabitants of Hiero, in whose predictions they placed the most implicit confidence. When on his deathbed this man called the natives together and told them, that after his death, when his flesh should be consumed and his bones mouldered to dust, their God Eraorangen would come to them in white houses on the water, and he conjured them with his last breath not to resist or fly from him, but to receive him with adoration, because he would come for their good.

The natives, who put the greatest faith in his words, buried him in a place apart from the rest of their dead, that his bones might afterwards be distinguished from theirs. When, therefore, the ships of Béthencourt approached, with their white sails swelling on the waves, they be-

thought them of the prophecy, and repaired to the cave where Yore was buried. Finding his flesh consumed, and his bones crumbled to dust, they conceived the prophecy fulfilled, and hurried joyfully to the harbour to welcome their god Eraorangen. Béthencourt was duly grateful for this unexpected success, and offered up a thanksgiving to God for having given him possession of these two delightful islands without any shedding of blood.

Béthencourt was much interested in the peculiar character and habits of the natives of Hiero. They were of a singularly sad and silent disposition, and of so gentle and affectionate a temper, that through the whole island there were no warlike weapons to be found. Their habits were those of the strictest temperance. They used no kind of intoxicating liquor; but confined themselves scrupulously to water: with which they were supplied in an extraordinary manner by the tree *garse*.*

* The *garse*, or water-tree, was an evergreen growing in the middle of the island, against the face of a perpendicular rock. There was a great scarcity of spring-water, but this

After a short stay at Hiero, Béthencourt returned to Lancerota, leaving a garrison in the former, commanded by one Lazzaro, to whom he gave the strictest injunctions to treat the natives with every kindness, and instruct them in the truth and practice of the Catholic religion.

Lazzaro proved entirely unfit for the trust reposed in him, for he treated the natives with a cruelty that transcended their powers of endurance, gentle and submissive as they were. His barbarity roused them to such a pitch, that they rose, and put him to death, expelled his people, and resumed the sovereignty of the island.

The case was represented to Béthencourt in

tree afforded abundance for all the islanders and their cattle. The water does not exude from the tree, but is produced in this manner :—Every morning a mist rises from the sea, which is borne by the east winds (which blows here constantly) against the steep rock where the tree stands; there it stops, and settles upon the leaves of the tree, which are of an enormous size, whence it distils in drops during the remainder of the day, till the mist is exhausted. The drops are received in large troughs, which are guarded by people living near the place, and whose duty it is to distribute it to all who come.

very different colours from the truth, and he was strongly urged to take revenge on the Hierians for the murder of his lieutenant; but the king refused to take any step till he had inquired into the circumstances. The result of the investigation was to shew that Lazzaro had been justly punished; and Béthencourt ordered two of the officers, and some of the men who had shared his guilt to be hanged. The natives, seeing justice so impartially administered, returned instantly to their allegiance.

But Canaria was still unconquered, and Béthencourt resolved to make another attempt. He succeeded in landing his few forces unmolested, and advanced a little way into the interior; but, being drawn into an ambuscade, the natives fell upon him with such impetuosity that nearly all his men perished. Béthencourt, as before, threw himself between his men and the enemy, and met the whole brunt of battle. As they retired step by step, he kept the whole force of the savages at bay; and, but for his dauntless courage, not a man would have returned alive to Lancerota.

Béthencourt was much cast down by this second failure, but his Norman spirit forbade him to despair; and he came to the resolution of going to Spain again, in search of further reinforcements.

Before his departure he summoned his followers together; he told them of his destination, and the reasons that rendered it imperative he should leave them for a while. He exhorted them to live together in peace and harmony, and to be fair and kind in their dealings with the natives. He then addressed himself particularly to the chiefs, enjoining them to administer justice according to the customs of Normandy, and to pay particular attention to the duties of religion. He fixed the sites of two churches, and gave instructions that they should be erected as speedily as possible, in order that the bishop, whom he intended to bring from Rome, might consecrate them on his arrival. Then, having appointed his nephew, Mason de Béthencourt, governor of the islands, he departed from the Canaries—never to return!

Béthencourt was received by Queen Catharine, widow of Henry III., with great honour. She heard with the deepest interest an account of his proceedings in his kingdom of the Canaries, and promised every assistance he could require to complete its reduction. She then furnished him with a suitable escort to proceed to Rome. From Rome he proceeded to Avignon, where Benedict XIII. was at that time, and procured the consecration of Albert Peraza, with the title of Bishop of Rubicon. Thence he passed on to Normandy; and, having visited some of his relations, went on to his native place, Grainville de la Teinturerie, where he fell sick and died, A. D. 1425, at the age of 66, and was buried behind the high altar in the parish church of Grainville.

The sovereignty of the Canaries soon passed away from the family of Béthencourt. For a short time after Béthencourt's departure, Mason carried on the government with mildness and justice; but, after his uncle's death, his conduct underwent an entire change, and

he began to treat the natives with great severity. Heavy complaints were made to Queen Catharine, who despatched Don Pedro Barba de Campos to inquire into the matter. With some difficulty Mason was prevailed on to return with Don Pedro to answer these charges in person before the Queen's commissioner, Count de Niebla. Mason succeeded in satisfying Niebla as to his conduct, and the latter prevailed on him to sell his share in the islands, reserving only the government to himself for life. Mason finding this government unsatisfactory, as he was unable to reduce the rest of the islands, retired to Madeira, where he married and died. Niebla sold the islands to Julien de Peraza, who, dying shortly after, was succeeded in the possession by his nephew of the same name. This last was slain in an attempt to conquer the remaining islands. His sister was his heir, who married Diego de Herrera. He sold the unreduced islands to the crown, but the conquest was not completed till some years afterwards, under Pedro de Vera in 1485.

II.

REGNER LODBROG.

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Regner Lodbrog was a Scandinavian Viking, who lived at the beginning of the ninth century. After a life of great military glory, he was captured by Ella, King of Northumbria, and condemned to die by the poison of vipers. Besides being a great hero, Regner was an eminent scald or poet, and he drowned his agonies by singing this chronicle of his exploits, while his attendants, who stood around, joined at intervals in a sort of chorus, "*Pugnavimus ensibus*," "We have fought with our swords." The original Latin will be found in Olaus Wormius' book, "De Literatura Runica." It was translated by him from the Runic.

Epicedium or Death Song of King Regner Lodbrog.

"We have fought with our swords. I was young, when, towards the east, in the bay of Oreon, we made torrents of blood flow, to

gorge the ravenous beast of prey, and the yellow-footed bird. There resounded the hard steel upon the lofty helmets of men. The whole ocean was one wound. The crow waded in the blood of the slain. When we had numbered twenty years, we lifted our spears on high, and everywhere spread our renown. Eight barons we overcame in the east, before the port of Diminum; and plentifully we feasted the eagle in that slaughter. The warm stream of wounds ran into the ocean. The army fell before us. When we steered our ships into the mouth of the Vistula, we sent the Helsingians to the hall of Odin. Then did the sword bite. The waters were all one wound. The earth was dyed red with the warm stream. The sword rung upon the coats of mail, and clove the bucklers in twain. None fled on that day, till among his ships Heraudus fell. Than him no braver baron cleaves the sea with ships; a cheerful heart did he ever bring to the combat. Then the host threw away their shields, when the uplifted spear flew at the breast of heroes. The sword bit the Scarfian rocks: bloody was

the shield in battle, until Rafno the king was slain. From the heads of warriors the warm sweat streamed down their armour. The crows around the Indirian islands had an ample prey. It were difficult to single out one among so many deaths. At the rising of the sun I beheld the spears piercing the bodies of foes, and the bows throwing forth their steel-pointed arrows. Loud roared the swords in the plains of Lano.—The virgin long bewailed the slaughter of that morning."—In this strain the poet continues to describe several other military exploits. The images are not much varied: the noise of arms, the streaming of blood, and the feasting the birds of prey often recurring. He mentions the death of two of his sons in battle; and the lamentation he describes as made for one of them is very singular. A Grecian or a Roman poet would have introduced the virgins or nymphs of the wood bewailing the untimely fall of a young hero. But, says our Gothic poet, "When Rogvaldus was slain, for him mourned all the hawks of heaven," as lamenting a benefactor who had so liberally supplied them

with prey; "for boldly," as he adds, "in the strife of swords did the breaker of helmets throw the spear of blood."

The poem concludes with sentiments of the highest bravery and contempt of death, "What is more certain to the brave man than death, though amidst the storm of swords he stands always ready to oppose it? He only regrets this life who hath never known distress. The timorous man allures the devouring eagle to the field of battle. The coward, wherever he comes, is useless to himself. This I esteem honourable, that the youth should advance to the combat fairly matched one against another; nor man retreat from man. Long was this the warrior's highest glory. He who aspires to the love of virgins, ought always to be foremost in the roar of arms. It appears to me, of truth, that we are led by the Fates. Seldom can any overcome the appointment of destiny. Little did I forsee that Ella was to have my life in his hands, in that day when fainting I concealed my blood, and pushed forth my ships into the waves; after we had spread a repast for the

beasts of prey throughout the Scottish bays. But this makes me always rejoice, that in the halls of our father Balder [or Odin] I know there are seats prepared, where, in a short time, we shall be drinking ale out of the hollow skulls of our enemies. In the house of the mighty Odin, no brave man laments death. I come not with the voice of despair to Odin's hall. How eagerly would all the sons of Aslanga now rush to war, did they know the distress of their father, whom a multitude of venemous serpents tear; I have given to my children a mother who hath filled their hearts with valour. I am fast approaching to my end. A cruel death awaits me from the viper's bite. A snake dwells in the midst of my heart. I hope that the sword of some of my sons shall yet be stained with the blood of Ella. The valiant youths will wax red with anger, and will not sit in peace. Fifty and one times have I reared the standard in battle. In my youth I learned to dye the sword in blood: my hope was then that no king among men would be more renowned than me. The goddesses of death will now

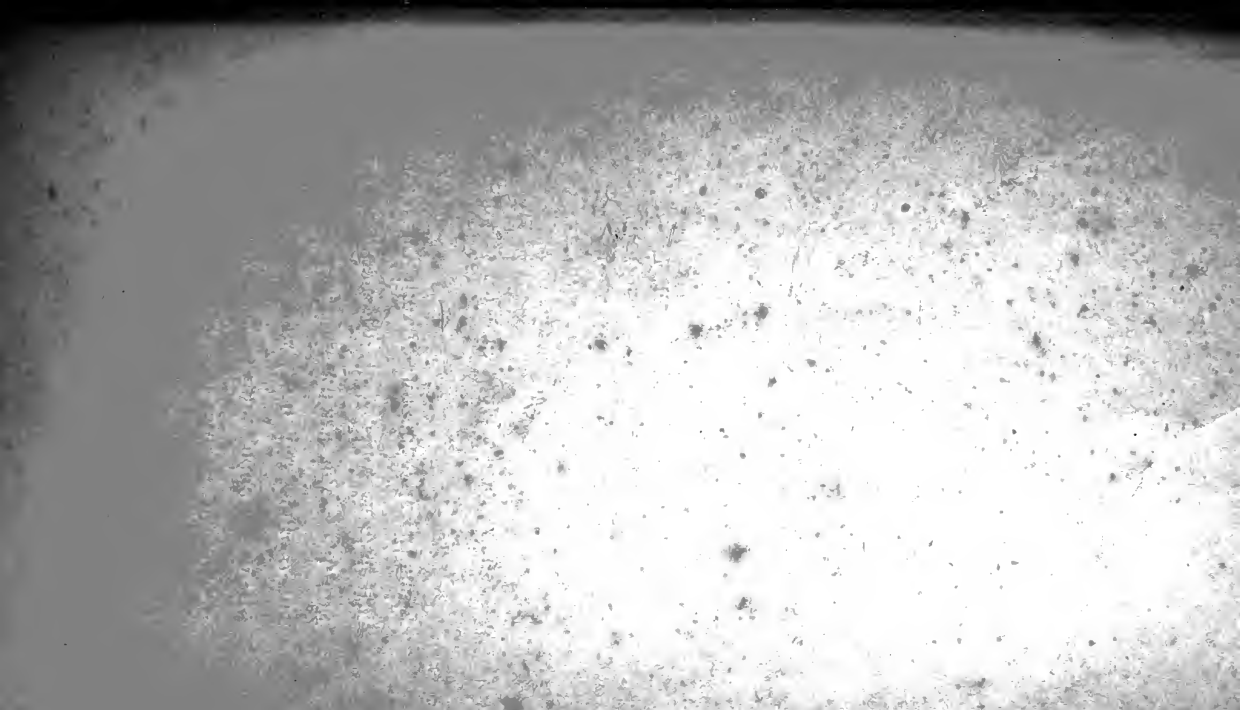
soon call me; I must not mourn my death. Now I end my song. The goddesses invite me away; they whom Odin has sent to me from his hall. I will sit upon a lofty seat, and drink ale joyfully with the goddesses of death. The hours of my life are run out. I will smile when I die."

I give the last verse in the Latin of Olaus:—

"Fert animus finire.
Invitant me Dysæ,
Quas ex Othini aula
Othinus mihi misit.
Lætus cervisiam cum Asis
In summa sede bibam.
Vitæ elapsæ sunt horæ
Ridens moriar."

THE END.

LONDON:
Printed by S. & J. Bentley, Wilson, and Fley,
Bangor House, Shoe Lane.



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